

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Town of Adams

2004



Prepared By



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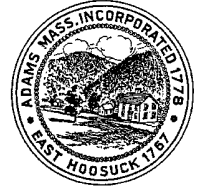
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



Introduction to the Community Development Plan Program



EXECUTIVE ORDER 418



Introduction to the Community Development Plan Program

On January 21, 2000, then Governor Paul Cellucci issued Executive Order 418, a measure designed to help communities plan for new opportunities while balancing economic development, transportation infrastructure improvements, and open space preservation. Technical assistance worth up to \$30,000 was made available to assist communities to produce Community Development Plans. Community Development Plans are intended to provide guidance as cities and towns consider options and avenues for future development. The plans focus on housing, economic and community development, transportation, and open space. The plan also includes strategies for how the community will develop housing that is affordable to families and individuals across a broad range of incomes.

The Town of Adams has completed or participated in a number of plans and studies in the past four years. Most recently the Town completed the *Sustainable Adams Plan*, the *Adams Downtown Development Plan* and the *Gateway Revitalization Plan for the Route 8 Corridor*. The Town also actively participated in the development of the various versions of the Greylock Glen Master Plan, with the most recent version being approved earlier in 2004 (*Amended Master Plan: Outdoor Recreation and Environmental Center Facility at Greylock Glen*, April 2004).

The Town participated in the Community Development Plan (CDP) program as an opportunity to engage in comprehensive planning while also addressing some specific planning issues that were identified generally in previous plans. The Town's CDP focuses on developing a local housing strategy, preparing a new Open Space & Recreation Plan, assessing properties along the northern segment of the Route 8 corridor for economic development potential, and conducting a corridor and access management study of the Route 8 corridor connecting Adams and North Adams. The plan also prepares a comprehensive series of modernized GIS maps of the Town's resources and land uses.

The Community Development Planning process was directed by the Town's Community Development Department. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission acted as lead consultant in preparing the plan and providing staff support and technical assistance. A traffic engineering firm, Clough Harbour Associates, assisted in preparing portions of the Transportation element of the Plan.

This Plan contains recommended actions. The Community Development Plan is based on the most accurate and detailed information and data available from Federal, State, local and private resources.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



Executive Summary



Executive Summary

The Community Development Plan addresses the Town of Adams concerns for growth and development into the future. The key findings, recommendations and products developed through this planning process are summarized below.

Open Space Element

The starting point for the *2003 Adams Open Space & Recreation Plan* was the draft of the 1997 Open Space Plan prepared by students from the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at the University of Massachusetts. The students developed a draft plan after meetings with the Parks Commission, the Adams Planning Board, Conservation Commission members, and the Adams Board of Selectmen. Given more immediate priorities, the Town was unfortunately unable to advance the draft through a public participation process, and the plan was not completed or adopted. In Fall 2001, the Town's Community Development Department initiated a new effort to prepare an open space and recreation plan for Adams. The Department requested technical assistance from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) in preparing an updated plan. The Board of Selectmen agreed that completion of the Open Space & Recreation Plan was a high priority for the Town. The Selectmen agreed to incorporate the plan preparation work within the Town's scope of services for its Community Development Plan.

The *2003 Adams Open Space & Recreation Plan* recommends actions to protect valued, environmentally-sensitive lands and water resources, enhance the quality of Town parks and recreational facilities, and preserve the Town's historic and cultural assets.

The stated goals of the Open Space Plan are:

- Preserve Adequate Open Space and Recreational Lands to Keep Pace with the Town's Growth and Development While Protecting Environmental Resources
- Increase Public Use and Awareness of Adams' Open Space Resources through Increased Public Access and Stewardship
- Develop and Maintain Recreational Facilities To Adequately Meet the Diverse Needs of Town Residents
- Protect the Town's Historic and Cultural Resources for the Enjoyment and Instruction of Future Generations

- Preserve Significant Environmentally-Sensitive Lands and Water Resources in Adams for Future Generations

The Plan has a number of objectives under these goals and a much larger number of specific actions. Priority actions include:

- Actively pursue grant funding to implement the Renfrew Park Master Plan. Acquire the two adjacent parcels on Friend Street to develop the parking and picnic facilities as proposed in the Plan.
- Develop additional youth sports playing fields for soccer, football, baseball, and other sports as needed.
- Develop additional basketball and tennis facilities within the Town's existing parks (priority Renfrew Park – basketball; Russell Field – tennis).
- Implement a comprehensive and on-going neighborhood reinvestment program to bring neighborhood parks facilities up to current standards.
- Involve the Parks Commission and the Conservation Commission more closely with the Town's five-year capital improvement programming process.
- Continue to participate in the Hoosic River Ecosystem Partnership to explore opportunities to enhance public access to the River, especially throughout the Downtown.
- Continue to improve Town park facilities so that they meet ADA accessibility standards.
- Work with the Berkshire Bike Path Council and the City of North Adams to extend the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail to connect Downtown Adams to Downtown North Adams.
- Install bike racks at key locations throughout the Downtown and at Town facilities. Undertake other efforts to secure Adams as a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly community.
- Work with MassDevelopment and DCR to develop cross-country skiing facilities at the Greylock Glen site.
- Upgrade playground equipment in all parks consistent with NPPS and CPSC standards, and install new equipment such as ground-level trampolines.
- Work with the Youth Center and the Adams-Cheshire School District to development and carry out appropriate youth programs for certain active recreational pursuits.
- In conjunction with Downtown revitalization efforts, aggressively pursue opportunities to develop additional pocket parks in Adams, and install benches, outdoor game tables, attractive planters, and other public amenities.
- Provide new picnic facilities within the Town's existing parks. Develop new picnic locations along scenic roadway segments and at other special places within Town.
- Develop new signage and community appearance standards as an amendment to the Town's Zoning Bylaws.

- Identify the Town's most important views and vistas to protect. Incorporate this analysis into the Town's Master Plan process and future updates of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- As part of the Town Master Plan update, develop neighborhood quality indices to evaluate neighborhoods within Adams on an on-going basis; Park and open space resources should be an important quality indicator.

Housing Element

The housing element focuses on developing a comprehensive housing strategy for Adams. The Housing element includes an inventory of housing supply, anticipated needs and demand, and analysis of affordability. This element provides documentation and analysis of a wide range of housing data and provides a number of recommended local actions to promote housing opportunities in the Town of Adams. The data presented includes discussion of local and regional demographics, economic issues such as assessed values, market values and property taxes, housing tenure, housing age and condition, vacancy rates, rental housing availability, rental costs and other relevant information.

Some of the key findings included:

- need for continued housing rehabilitation efforts to improve aging housing stock
- need to create opportunities for new housing production across a broad range of incomes, including high-end housing to ensure a balanced community
- need for additional housing opportunities for elderly and persons with disabilities
- need for maintenance and production of additional affordable rental housing
- need to reintegrate housing into the downtown area
- need to improve the water distribution system to provide adequate water service to areas appropriate for new housing development within the Town's urban service boundary.

Adams will continue efforts to support and promote the creation of additional housing opportunities to diversify the housing stock and broaden the range of housing options for current and potential residents in the Town. An average of 8 building permits were issued annually from 1997 to 2002, and all five new homes constructed in 2002 were considered affordable by EO418 guidelines. Based on previous construction trends and market values, the Town expects to realize five (5) affordable units per year in order to meet the needs of the community.

Adams has established the following objectives to meet the specific housing needs of the community while supporting regional efforts for affordable housing:

- Continue to support housing production for households across a broad range of incomes in areas identified by the Community Development Plan in order to establish a more diverse and balanced range of housing types across all income levels.
- Evaluate the feasibility of housing reuse in the McDermid Mill, the Old Stone Mill, Curtis Fine Papers, and other underutilized mill buildings in order to increase housing opportunities within walking distance to downtown and with access to the Hoosic River and Ashuwillticook Rail Trail.
- Target rehab assistance to multi-tenant and other downtown buildings to enhance the quality of Downtown as a neighborhood and to support downtown business development goals.
- Specifically target redevelopment of vacant or underutilized upper floors on Park Street, Summer Street and along the Route 8 Corridor in order to upgrade the quality of the Town's housing stock.
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of neighborhood conditions: evaluate the condition of the housing stock, potential for infill development, adequacy of public facilities and open space, and infrastructure needs on a neighborhood basis. Prepare a neighborhood-based plan for housing as an element of the Town's anticipated Master Plan update.
- Work to ensure that the Renfrew Park renovation effort acts as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization.
- Enhance the accessibility of existing housing to address the needs of the Town's elderly and disabled elderly residents.
- Work closely with the owners of remaining large parcels to ensure future residential development expands housing options within Adams and is of high quality.
- Work with the Adams Fire District to address inadequacies in the water supply distribution system ensuring appropriate areas for new residential development will be served by public utilities.
- Support infill development as identified in the *Adams Downtown Development Plan*.
- Continue the Town's housing rehabilitation efforts to maintain and preserve its existing housing stock through DHCD and MassHousing programs.

Economic Development Element

The economic development element focuses on development along part of the Route 8 Corridor in Adams. The study considers areas suitable for economic development based on land use, development constraints, market conditions and infrastructure concerns. Extensive land use data incorporating information on individual parcels in the corridor has been compiled and analyzed as part of this study. Similarly, data on existing traffic conditions was gathered and considered as part of the analysis.

The key findings of this analysis are that in spite of a number of challenging factors, this area has potential for economic development and commercial growth. The study noted that while the Town has made strong efforts at revitalization, particularly in the downtown area, the overall economic conditions in terms of employment, income levels and property values still lag behind the region, the state and the nation.

The study found that one of the key challenges to economic development in the study area included constraints to developable land that could complicate or prohibit the development of a number of parcels in the area. Parcel sizes are small and ownership fragmented so that land assembly is needed to achieve meaningful economic improvements in the corridor. It was also determined that some parts of the study area are blighted and some owners have failed to reinvest, and some cases to even maintain their properties. This circumstance acts as a deterrent to new investment or even existing owners interested in expanding their operations. Finally, it was noted that some of the key parcels in the study area were significantly underutilized and that the growth in the corridor has been sporadic and has not been managed with a specific vision to guide land use decisions.

The study concluded that considerable, focused efforts are necessary in order to redevelop the corridor. The study area was noted as having developable land that is appropriately zoned for business and industry. It was determined that the Town also has established the conditions for a “business-friendly” regulatory environment that provides for flexibility in developing and financing development projects. It was also concluded that there is a regional need for additional industrial/business space and Adams has some properties within the corridor that are suitable for these uses. The fact that the public utility infrastructure in the study area is also available and accessible was also acknowledged as a major benefit in terms of attracting business to the area. The study also discussed a number of other factors that enhance the opportunity for economic development within the study area, such as inexpensive land, relatively low taxes and a reliable local labor market that add to the corridor’s attractiveness as an area for future growth and development.

Based on these findings, this study concludes that the corridor merits further planning and investigation and proposes the following recommendations:

1. Develop more focused plans for specific improvement and development projects in the Route 8 Corridor. These should include:

- Contact owners of key parcels within the corridor to determine their interest in developing/redeveloping their properties.
 - Work to assemble parcels into larger tracts which would be more developable.
 - Work with regional planning and economic development organizations to obtain funding for advanced planning, marketing analyses and/or to prepare a site specific redevelopment plan for developable properties within the corridor, particularly the recently vacated Curtis Paper Mill site.
 - Consider aesthetic improvements to the Route 8 corridor gateway area, for example improved signage and streetscaping to provide a uniform identity to the corridor area.
 - Connect interested property owners within the corridor with organizational resources that can assist them in designing, financing and developing their properties.
 - Prepare and disseminate informational materials to businesses and property owners in the corridor discussing the benefits available through the Economic Target Area (ETA). Materials can be printed material, such as a brochure or digital media such as the town website.
 - Designate key portions of the Route 8 Corridor as an Economic Opportunity Area (EOA).
2. Develop a comprehensive vision for the Route 8 Corridor; including the “Gateway” area studied in 2003, working with a variety of stakeholders and interests, and build a consensus regarding appropriate directions and actions. Specific steps might be:
- Circulate this report to the appropriate Town officials and community stakeholders for review and consideration
 - Prepare an Initial Project Brief and submit it to the Berkshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee to ensure that the Curtis Paper Mill site and any other selected sites in the corridor are listed as regional priorities for economic assistance.
 - Work with property owners to ensure that marketable undeveloped or underdeveloped properties are listed on the Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development (MAED) and the Berkshire Chamber of Commerce Site Listing websites. This is a marketing and promotional tool that can assist property owners to connect with potential purchasers, developers or tenants.
 - Identify and work with local or regional economic development entities to design and conduct a more comprehensive opinion survey of property and business owners within the corridor to determine needs and establish a vision for growth within the corridor.
 - Work cooperatively with area economic development organizations, such as Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, to host a business forum for business and property owners to determine key issues of concern and to discuss ways to promote development within the Route 8 Corridor area (the towns of Lee and Dalton have recently hosted successful forums)

3. Review existing regulations and update or create regulations which better fit the vision for the corridor and which encourage or require that future land development activities work toward meeting that vision.
 - Existing zoning should be reviewed and both the zoning map and allowable uses and standards within the zoning districts might be modernized to meet current conditions and standards.
 - Existing sign standards should be reviewed and considered for amendment if needed.
 - Corridor access management techniques should be implemented along the corridor to reduce curb cuts and improve traffic safety, enabling the corridor to better handle traffic flow in the future. Consider developing driveway permit bylaws, including design standards.
 - Consider a property maintenance bylaw that deals with removal or screening of junk and the maintenance of vacant lots.
 - Consider a screening requirement for outdoor storage of material and equipment.

Transportation Element

The focus of the transportation element was to provide the Town of Adams with a comprehensive Access Management Study that evaluates transportation issues along a segment of the Route 8 Corridor. The access management study focuses on the Route 8 corridor from Hoosac Street in Adams to Hodges Cross Road in North Adams. Route 8 is the only major north-south access road, which serves Adams and North Adams. Route 8 is classified as a principal arterial, and the primary purpose of a principal arterial is to provide uninterrupted passage for through traffic. Therefore, preservation of capacity and level of service of Route 8 is important in light of anticipated development along this corridor.

Goals

The goals of this traffic analysis include:

- Evaluate impacts of developments (e.g., redevelopment of North Adams Plaza) and on-street parking along the corridor on capacity and level of service of Rte. 8
- Evaluate intersections with respect to capacity and geometric layout for present and future build-out scenarios
- Evaluate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Identify safety issues and recommend countermeasures
- Identify opportunities for access management

A summary of the findings and key recommendations of the study are presented below.

Intersections

This study evaluated three intersections along Route 8 in Adams. These intersections are controlled by Stop-signs.

Hoosac and Route 8

- At present, during afternoon peak hour, vehicles turning left from Hoosac Street onto Route 8 experience unacceptable delays (LOS “F”). This situation will further worsen with the obvious increase in future traffic volumes. Therefore, traffic signals may become warranted at this intersection.
- The possibility of prohibition of trucks entering onto Route 8 from Hoosac Street should be investigated.
- The possibility of banning left turns from Depot Street onto Hoosac Street should be investigated.

Friend and Route 8

This intersection is located close to a gas station and an auto dealership.

- At present, during the afternoon peak hour, vehicles entering Route 8 from Friend Street experience LOS “F”; vehicles entering Route 8 from Renfrew Street experience LOS “D”. While this situation is already unacceptable, in the future, the LOS of both approaches will deteriorate to “F”. Therefore, traffic signals may become warranted at this intersection.
- This study recommends the closure of the northernmost driveway from Route 8 to the gas station. The closure of this driveway reduces conflicting vehicle movements at the intersection. Similarly, the possibility of closing the driveway to the auto dealership nearest the intersection should be considered. Access and egress can be provided by widening the second driveway, which is located further away from the intersection. The closure of the above-mentioned driveways also increases the safety of pedestrian crossings.
- To improve the sight distance for traffic on the Renfrew Street approach, the stop line should be moved closer to the intersection.
- To improve safety for pedestrians using the crossing on Friend Street, the front stop line should be eliminated and the pedestrian crossing and the rear stop line moved closer to the intersection. If necessary, the approach lanes on Friend Street should be widened to accommodate two lanes (one for left turns and through traffic, another for right turns and through traffic) after relocating the stop line.

Lime Street/SMI Driveway & Route 8

- The present peak hour performance of this intersection is somewhat acceptable in comparison to the two previously discussed intersections. However, in the future, traffic entering Route 8 from side roads will experience significant delays (LOS “F”). Therefore, traffic signals may become warranted at this intersection.

Capacity of Route 8

- To accommodate the anticipated growth in traffic, the two-lane segment of Route 8 would have to be widened to four lanes. Possible alternatives to road

widening include managing direct access to Route 8 (e.g., service roads) and improving transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities.

Pedestrian facilities

- This study suggests stamped asphalt (to make it look like a brick paved crossing) and installing push button operated flashing lights on the crosswalk in front of the seniors' housing complex on Route 8 for the extra safety of pedestrians.
- This study suggests that the town of Adams should remove snow from sidewalks on a more regular basis. The properly maintained sidewalks would make the town of Adams more pedestrian friendly during winter months.

Traffic safety

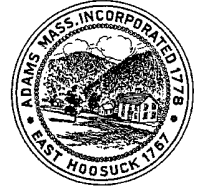
- Hoosac Street/Route 8 intersection reported 16 accidents from 1998 to 2002. The majority were rear-end accidents. Installation of over-head flashing beacons, improving crosswalk markings, and increasing curb radii are possible remedial actions. Future signalization of this intersection will contribute to reduce conflicts.
- The road section of Route 8 between Brown Street and the North Adams town line would be better served with a two-way left turn lane. Such a lane could accommodate vehicles turning left from Route 8 as well as vehicles entering Route 8 from driveways and wanting to turn left. If it is difficult to introduce a two-way left turn lane, then the feasibility of introducing left turn bays on Route 8 for selected driveways should be considered (e.g., Brown Street, Apremont Street, and Newark Street).
- Increased efforts to curb speeding in downtown Adams are necessary since a middle school, a senior housing complex, and a number of pedestrian crossings are located in downtown Adams.
- This study recommends repainting of road markings on a more consistent basis to provide better guidance for drivers.
- This study recommends placing gateway elements north of Friend Street to indicate the transition from industrial land use to residential land use. Planting of trees on roadside to visually reduce the width of the roadway and installation of welcome signs are some suggestions.
- When the high-speed operation of traffic on Route 8 and the resulting safety risks for human traffic controllers are considered, it would be more efficient if traffic signals were used to stop traffic on Route 8. Such signals would be activated only during periods of mineral transportation.

Land use and transportation

- The vacant land between Columbia Terrace and Friend Street should be considered either for outright acquisition and preservation or for purchasing access rights. This recommendation is made to prevent any adverse impacts that may result from adding new driveways (with the development of vacant land parcels) onto a heavily developed section of the Route 8 corridor.
- The access to any new developments on the east side of Route 8 between Renfrew Street and Lime Street should be provided via secondary streets.

These recommendations are made to prevent any new direct driveways onto private properties from Route 8.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



Community Setting



Community Setting



The Town of Adams is located in northwestern Massachusetts, bordered by the City of North Adams to the north, Cheshire to the south, Savoy and Florida on the east, and Williamstown and New Ashford to the west. The Town is located in the valley of the South Branch of the Hoosic River. The Town's economy was historically driven by industry. The power of the river was harnessed to allow the early development of industry. The industrial economy was initially driven by textile and paper mills and mining operations. The Town's manufacturing base has declined dramatically over the last several decades, as has been typical of the entire Berkshire region. Though a fairly significant amount of manufacturing still occurs in Adams, the town appears to be transitioning to a service-based economy and is trying to capture a portion of the Berkshire tourism and recreation market. The Town is home to an abundance of significant natural, historical and recreational assets, such as Mount Greylock State Reservation, the Hoosic River, a number of historic sites and buildings, and the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail which extends southward almost to Pittsfield from downtown Adams. An aggressive revitalization process has also been underway in the downtown area. These efforts have included development of the *Adams Downtown Development Plan*, a mill conversion to high-quality housing (actually done over a decade ago), streetscaping improvements, storefront façade improvements, and new business start-ups. Most recently, the Town became home to the new multi-million dollar, state-of-the-art Welcome to the Berkshires – Adams Visitors Center, operated by and home of the Berkshire Visitors Bureau.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
TOWN OF ADAMS



Open Space and Recreation Plan



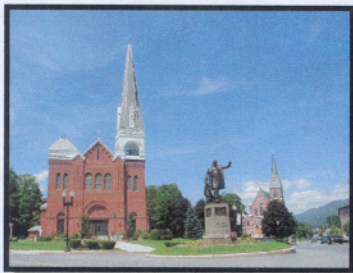
Introduction to the Open Space Element



The *2003 Adams Open Space & Recreation Plan* recommends actions to enhance the quality of Town parks and recreation facilities, preserve the Town's historic and cultural assets, and protect valued environmentally sensitive lands and water resources. The Open Space Element of the Community Development Plan includes the Open Space & Recreation Plan Summary, Goals, and Action Plan excerpted from the completed *2003 Adams Open Space & Recreation Plan*.

TOWN OF

ADAMS



Open Space and Recreation Plan 2003

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We express our gratitude to the Adams Parks Commission, the Adams Conservation Commission, the Adams Board of Selectmen, the Adams Community Development Department, and long-time Adams Town Administrator James J. Leitch.

Our appreciation goes out to the staff at the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, particularly Amy Pfeufer, Dan McCue, Peter Falcier and Tom Matuszko for their guidance as well as Mark Maloy for his GIS support.

We also thank the many residents and board members of Town committees who offered information, insight and valuable time.

SECTION 1: PLAN SUMMARY

The residents of Adams, Massachusetts, deeply value its rural character as expressed by the beautiful scenery, historic buildings, and family-friendly nature of the town.

The citizens are interested in highlighting the beauty of the Hoosic River as it flows centrally through Town, and they are interested in protecting the scenic beauty of the farms and open spaces outside of downtown. Many wish to develop paths and trails that highlight the recently developed Ashuwillticook Rail Trail. Residents are also interested in revitalizing the town's valuable network of neighborhood and regional parks.

As reflected in the *Sustainable Adams* action plan, the Town is interested in revitalizing the commercial and light industrial enterprises in the downtown area, paying special consideration to the town's natural resources.

A major portion of the Town of Adams' land is owned and protected by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as state forest and state park. Working with the state to welcome local use of these areas is a major interest expressed by the town as a means to achieve recreational goals.

The *2003 Open Space and Recreation Plan* for Adams, Massachusetts, is developed from citizen participation and designed to address the following aspirations:

- Retaining Adams' valued open spaces, historical aspects, quality of life and strong sense of community as it builds a sustainable economic base.
- Expanding recreational opportunities that are diverse, accessible, and safe for all citizens.
- Protecting the quality of its natural resources.

The *2003 Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan* recommends actions to protect valued, environmentally-sensitive lands and water resources, enhance the quality of Town parks and recreational facilities, and preserve the Town's historic and cultural assets. The plan considers the use of educational materials and activities as crucial aspects of long-term preservation and land-use planning.

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Town of Adams aspires to become a sustainable community, preserve its sense of belonging and sense of place, enhance its quality of life, foster economic security and maintain ecological integrity. This Open Space and Recreation Plan addresses various choices regarding future management of the town's natural resources, expansion and upgrading of its recreational facilities, and development opportunities that could contribute to the revitalization of Adams' economy. The Plan offers recommendations and in some instances puts forward targeted resolutions.

The residents of Adams care deeply about the character of their town and are vocal advocates for improving their quality of life while maintaining and preserving their scenic, family-oriented community. Residents share the sentiment that economic stability can be achieved while simultaneously protecting the environment and enhancing recreational opportunities in town.

The *2003 Open Space and Recreation Plan* will update the 1986 Plan to reflect changes in the economy that have necessarily altered Adams' goals for future development.

PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The starting point for the *2003 Adams Open Space & Recreation Plan* was the draft of the 1998 Open Space Plan prepared by students from the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at the University of Massachusetts. Under the direction of Adams then-Town Administrator, James Leitch, the students solicited input from the public and various Town boards through meetings and a public survey. The students developed a draft plan after meetings with the Parks Commission, the Adams Planning Board, Conservation Commission members, and the Adams Board of Selectmen. Given more immediate priorities, the Town was unfortunately unable to advance the draft through a public participation process, and the plan was not completed or adopted.

In Fall 2001, the Town's Community Development Department initiated a new effort to prepare an open space and recreation plan for Adams. The Department requested technical assistance from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) in preparing an updated plan. The Board of Selectmen agreed that completion of the Open Space and Recreation Plan was a high priority for the Town. The Selectmen agreed to incorporate the plan preparation work within the Town's scope of services for its Community Development Plan, as authorized by Executive Order 418 and supervised by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

A survey was mailed to approximately 600 Adams residents selected randomly from a polling list prepared by the Town Clerk. The *North Adams Transcript* published an

article in June 2002 describing the purpose of the survey. The Town received 200 responses to the survey, the results of which are described in Appendix A.

SECTION 3: COMMUNITY SETTING

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Adams, a small town with a population of 8,800 and declining, is located in northern Berkshire County in northwestern Massachusetts. The town shares boundaries with the city of North Adams to the north, the towns of Cheshire to the south, Savoy to the east, and New Ashford and Williamstown to the west. It is situated 15 miles northeast of Pittsfield, 60 miles east of Albany, 138 miles west of Boston and 158 miles north of New York City.

Set in the Hoosic River Valley, Adams has Mount Greylock on its western edge and the Hoosac Range on its eastern side. The Hoosic River flows northward through the center of town, eventually meeting the Hudson River at Stillwater, New York. State Rt. 8 is the major transportation corridor leading south to Cheshire, a rural-residential community and north to North Adams, an economically challenged city. Route 8 parallels the Hoosic River. Both the river and the road are the main development corridors in town. The Massachusetts Turnpike is the closest U.S. Interstate highway and is 36 miles south of the town.



Figure 1. Adams is located in northern Berkshire County, 138 miles west of Boston and 15 miles northeast of Pittsfield. (All images courtesy of BRPC, unless otherwise noted.)

Adams' remote location delayed human settlement of this area until the mid 1700s. It was incorporated as a township in 1778, one of the last in the Commonwealth to achieve this status. The fine motive power of the Hoosic River was quickly put to use, as Adams became a thriving nineteenth century mill town. When the Adams and Pittsfield Railroad line came through in 1843, Adams instantly had access to major centers of commerce such as Boston and New York City. Railroads also made Adams accessible to families emigrating from Europe who were attracted by the abundance of available work. Within one year of the railroad's arrival, the population of Adams doubled, and five new mills were built within seven years. Since then, however, most factories have been shut



Figure 2. The Hoosic River has historically been one of Adams' most important natural and economic resources.

down, the population has steeply declined and the town is experiencing an economic recession. Specialty Minerals, Inc. is presently mining Adams' extensive limestone deposits in the northwest of town. The rich forests surrounding the valley are a source of excellent timber.

Though Adams' relative inaccessibility may seem an impediment to growth, it could also pave the way for Adams' rebirth. It is the town's isolation that has preserved its rural character, sustained its residents and inspired visitors. Several Berkshire towns along Route 7 have capitalized on their scenic, rural and cultural resources as an incentive for tourism. Stockbridge, for example, boasts of such culturally significant sites as Naumkeag, a famous nineteenth century New England country garden estate; the Norman Rockwell museum; the Chesterwood Estate, home of Daniel Chester French, sculptor of the Lincoln Memorial; and the Berkshire Theater Festival, an annual event held during the summer months. Further north along Route 7 is the historic town of Lenox featuring Tanglewood, the world-renowned, idyllic summer music retreat for the Boston Symphony Orchestra and center for performing arts. The Museum of Contemporary Art (MassMoCA), located in North Adams, caps off a regional cultural corridor that Adams can participate in. Historically significant sites such as the Susan B. Anthony birthplace, the Quaker Meeting House (Figure 3) and the historic mill areas make Adams an excellent contributor to such a cultural corridor.



Figure 3. The Quaker Meeting House (above) and the Susan B. Anthony birthplace and memorial (below) are two of Adams' prime cultural attractions. (*Susan B. Anthony portrait credit: Berkshire Chamber of Commerce*)



In addition to the area's bountiful cultural assets, the Berkshire region is equally rich in outdoor recreational opportunities, and Adams' greatest natural resource is the majestic Mount Greylock and picturesque setting of the valley. The surrounding Greylock and Hoosac ranges are threaded with trails, streams and wildlife, offering opportunities for hiking, biking, fishing, swimming and hunting. When Adams' scenic and natural resources are combined with its cultural assets, it is clear that Adams is brimming with opportunity.

HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY

Following the end of the French-Indian wars in the mid-1700s, land parcels in the Berkshire area went up for sale. Wealthy colonial businessmen purchased the land and hired a Congregational minister to establish a church and bring along his flock to settle the area. These early inhabitants soon tired of the isolation and rocky farmland, and sold their



Figure 4. Mount Greylock, Massachusetts' highest point, rises majestically over Adams. The mountain has featured prominently in Adams' settlement history, industrial development, and touristic attraction.

parcels to a group of Quakers from Rhode Island in the 1770s. It is from this second wave of settlers that Adams' most famous resident, Susan B. Anthony, is descended (Figure 5). Anthony is a nationally significant historic figure, well known as a tireless feminist leader and suffragist, as well as the only woman to be depicted on American currency. In 1778, the town was incorporated and named for another famous revolutionary, Samuel Adams, one of the most vocal and ardent supporters of colonial independence from England.

Prudent land stewardship was essential to the survival of the early settlers of this rugged and isolated area. They had to learn to make use of the resources the land provided them, and to learn how to use them wisely. Early townsfolk fashioned brick from rich clay deposits, and harvested tanning bark from the town's abundant forests, using it to tan leather. They discovered an iron ore deposit at the foot of Mount Greylock and established iron foundries, and in early industrial times they tapped the Hoosic's waters to power mills and factories.

Textile mills entered the scene in the early 1800s, with the first cotton mill. Wool and paper mills followed the Adams and Pittsfield Railroad Line, which came through mid-century. By 1850, industry had replaced agriculture as the predominant employment sector. With each new mill came a new wave of settlement, each usually dominated by a different ethnic group seeking jobs, freedom and prosperity. Housing, businesses, schools and churches sprang up around each mill. These small neighborhood pockets made it possible for the new citizens to maintain their cultural identities. At one point, church services were being conducted in five different languages in five different churches throughout the town. Adams continued to prosper through the beginning of the twentieth century, with the population peaking in 1925 at 13,500.

When American industry began to move its factories closer to raw materials and less expensive labor in the South, the economic situation in Adams, like many New England mill towns, began to falter. Further contributing to the economic downturn was the very



Figure 5. The concreted Hoosic River channel keeps flood waters out of downtown Adams.

source from which the town drew its strength—the Hoosic River. Following the Great Depression and the industrial flight to the South, four major floods between 1901 and 1938 wiped-out most of the remaining industry. Economic recovery from this confluence of circumstance has been slow and only fractional.

The Army Corps of Engineers undertook major flood control efforts in the 1950s, resulting in the concrete channelization that now exists along the downtown stretches of the Hoosic River (Figure 5). Though this may have quelled the river for the time being, the area's steep topography and narrow valley structure still make parts of Adams vulnerable to localized catastrophic flooding.

Urban Renewal projects razed Center Street in 1967, replacing historic but decrepit buildings with new shopping sites. A similar project was planned for Park Street but was narrowly averted when Adams citizens rallied to save the street. Citizens banded together again in 1980 and raised the funding to restore the main downtown area to its current condition (Figure 6).

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The following statistical profile of Adams and its residents is derived from both the 1990 and 2000 US Censuses. Demographic information was additionally provided by the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) at the University of Massachusetts, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Division of Employment and Training.

The 2000 population of Adams is 8,809, with a population density of 394 persons per square mile. Adams' population has been declining since its 1925 peak of 13,500. This is consistent with trends in Berkshire County, however the trend is reversed at the state level. This population decline is most likely due to job outflow. The age of Adams' residents is fairly equitably distributed among age groups. This indicates that the *2003 Open Space And Recreation Plan* must



Figure 6. Downtown Adams has undergone significant restoration since 1980.

be comprehensive and must accommodate a wide spectrum of ages and interests. A higher proportion of senior citizens exists in Adams than in Massachusetts. The median age for Adams is 41.3, much higher than the state median of 36.5. This indicates the need to plan recreation facilities appropriate for use by an aging population.

Table 3-1: Historical Population for Adams

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Adams	12,034	12,391	11,772	10,381	9,445	8,809
Berkshire County	132,966	142,135	149,402	145,110	139,352	134,953
Massachusetts	4,690,514	5,148,578	5,689,170	5,737,093	6,016,425	6,349,097

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 3-2: Table of Age Distribution in Adams

Age Range	Population	Age Range	Population
<5	460	25-34	1,012
5-9	591	35-44	1,356
10-14	559	45-54	1,209
15-19	559	55-64	872
20-24	391	65+	1800

Source: US Census Bureau

Adams is racially homogeneous, with over 97.5% percent identifying themselves as white. Great diversity within this group exists, however, owing to the town's strong immigrant ethnic roots. The largest cultural group in Adams is of Polish descent, with significant Italian, German, Irish and French-Canadian groups present as well.

The 1990 median household income in Adams was \$25,060. This was 67.8 percent of the statewide median. Only 8.8 percent of residents fell below the poverty level, however, as compared with 8.9 percent statewide (based on 1990 Census). This suggests that the average Adams resident is hard working and middle class. However, the unemployment rate for Adams increased from 5.0% in 2000 to 6.3% in 2001.

Table 3-3: Unemployment Trends for Adams

Year	Labor Force	Unemployment	Adams' Unemployment Rate	Statewide Rate
1990	4583	410	8.9%	6.0%
1991	4659	773	16.6%	9.1%
1992	4419	598	13.5%	8.6%
1993	4369	511	11.7%	6.9%
1994	4205	451	10.7%	6.0%
1995	4034	324	8.0%	5.4%
1996	4038	299	7.4%	4.3%
1997	4067	287	7.1%	4.0%

Year	Labor Force	Unemployment	Adams' Unemployment Rate	Statewide Rate
1998	3989	232	5.8%	3.3%
1999	3952	221	5.6%	3.2%
2000	3825	192	5.0%	2.6%
2001	3837	240	6.3%	3.7%

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Division of Employment and Training (Local Area Unemp. Statistics.)

Many residents work in neighboring towns such as Cheshire, North Adams and Pittsfield. Fifty-seven percent of workers travel 15-29 minutes to work. An additional 33 percent of workers travel 30-45 minutes to work. Most of Adams labor force is employed in the trade sector (retail and wholesale), with manufacturing jobs as the second largest employment group, and the ever-increasing service industry third. Employment trends in Adams indicate that the Labor Force, that is the number of people employed in Adams, has declined from 2,592 in 1990 to 2,138 in 2000. The five largest employers in Adams are: Specialty Minerals, Inc.; the Adams-Cheshire Regional School District; Crown Vantage; Polyfibron; and Aladco.

Table 3-4: Employment by Major Sectors

Year	Total Employment	Government	Construction	Manufacturing	Retail and Wholesale Trade	Services
1990	2,582	369	215	813	669	332
1991	2,262	348	193	634	599	309
1992	2,247	346	152	592	672	319
1993	2,293	354	131	534	742	338
1994	2,380	379	144	560	764	345
1995	2,033	349	159	460	549	348
1996	2,154	351	168	464	582	373
1997	2,239	362	164	478	640	363
1998	2,098	370	168	480	570	290
1999	2,160	399	177	482	595	308
2000	2,138	396	199	474	581	291

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Division of Employment and Training (ES-202 Series)

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Patterns and Trends

Adams began as a small farming community, surrounded by rugged hills and thick forests. As the fertile plains of the Midwest became more accessible via railroad, river and canal travel, farm families migrated west. By 1850, industry was booming; textile and paper mills sprang up along the banks of the Hoosic River and its tributaries, forming a veinated landscape development pattern. Along Route 8, the industrial landscape and its associated pocket neighborhoods still dominate. Other sections within Adams are

characterized by low-density residential land use that has developed over the years as farmland frontage has been subdivided for single-family house lots. Adams is fortunate to retain its traditional settlement pattern of a distinct town center, mill and industrial development north and south of this center, less dense residential development rising into the hillsides, and finally protected farmland and forestland along the higher elevations.

Land use in Adams (1997 data) is 66% Forest, 18 % Agricultural and Open, 9% Residential, and <5% Urban and Industrial. From 1985 to 1997 a modest amount of agricultural/open land has been lost (<200 acres), with the majority of this being converted to residential property. The town also lost a few industrial acres in the same time period.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Transportation System

Adams' location in Berkshire County restricts transportation to and from the town. US Route 7 links the major cities and towns in the County, but does not pass through Adams. Principal highways in Adams are State Routes 8, running north-south between North Adams and Pittsfield, and 116, which runs primarily east-west from Adams to Sunderland, at which point it runs north-south to Springfield. Access from the Mass Pike is slow and indirect. This US Interstate lies 36 miles south of town. A bypass around Pittsfield has been proposed several times over the past 20 years to improve access to the North Berkshire area.

The intra-town transportation network is limited to some degree by topography and protected open space. There is no road access within Adams to the summit of Mt. Greylock, the most prominent landscape feature in town. The State Reservation property occupies a large portion of the western half of Town, prohibiting future road access to the site. The steep topography on both the eastern and western sides of town have helped concentrate roads and development in the lower lands along the Hoosic River. As Route 8 also parallels the river, transportation and development have historically been concentrated in the valley and floodplain.

The Town is focused on the new Ashuwillticook Rail Trail—a proposed recreation path traversing the length of Berkshire County from Connecticut to the Vermont border. The first phase of the Ashuwillticook is now complete (Lanesboro to Cheshire). Phase II, which extends the bikeway a total of ten miles through downtown Adams, was opened July 14, 2003. It is hoped that the trail's extension behind the Town's "Main Street" (now nearing completion) will establish a key activity/interest generator that has the promise of expanding the customer base for downtown businesses and fostering new complementary business creation. The Town is working to extend the Ashuwillticook north to connect with downtown North Adams. If successful, the rail trail will provide an important alternative transportation mode in the northern Berkshires. Over the next several years, the Town will work to develop a more comprehensive bikeway system to all parts of the community with the Ashiwillticook as the spine of the new system.

North Adams and Pittsfield are major points of entry into Massachusetts for freight rail. There is no passenger or freight rail service in Adams, but the town has access to the network of inter-modal facilities serving Massachusetts.

Adams is a member of the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA). The BRTA provides fixed-route bus service to neighboring towns, with connections to the southern Berkshires via Pittsfield. The BRTA also offers user-side paratransit services for the elderly and disabled.

The Berkshire region has several commercial airports. The Harriman & West Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility located North Adams, has a 4,300' x 100' asphalt runway. The facility only serves non-scheduled commercial flights. The North Adams Airport Commission expects some future growth of the facility, however, it is limited by environmental constraints.

Water Supply Systems

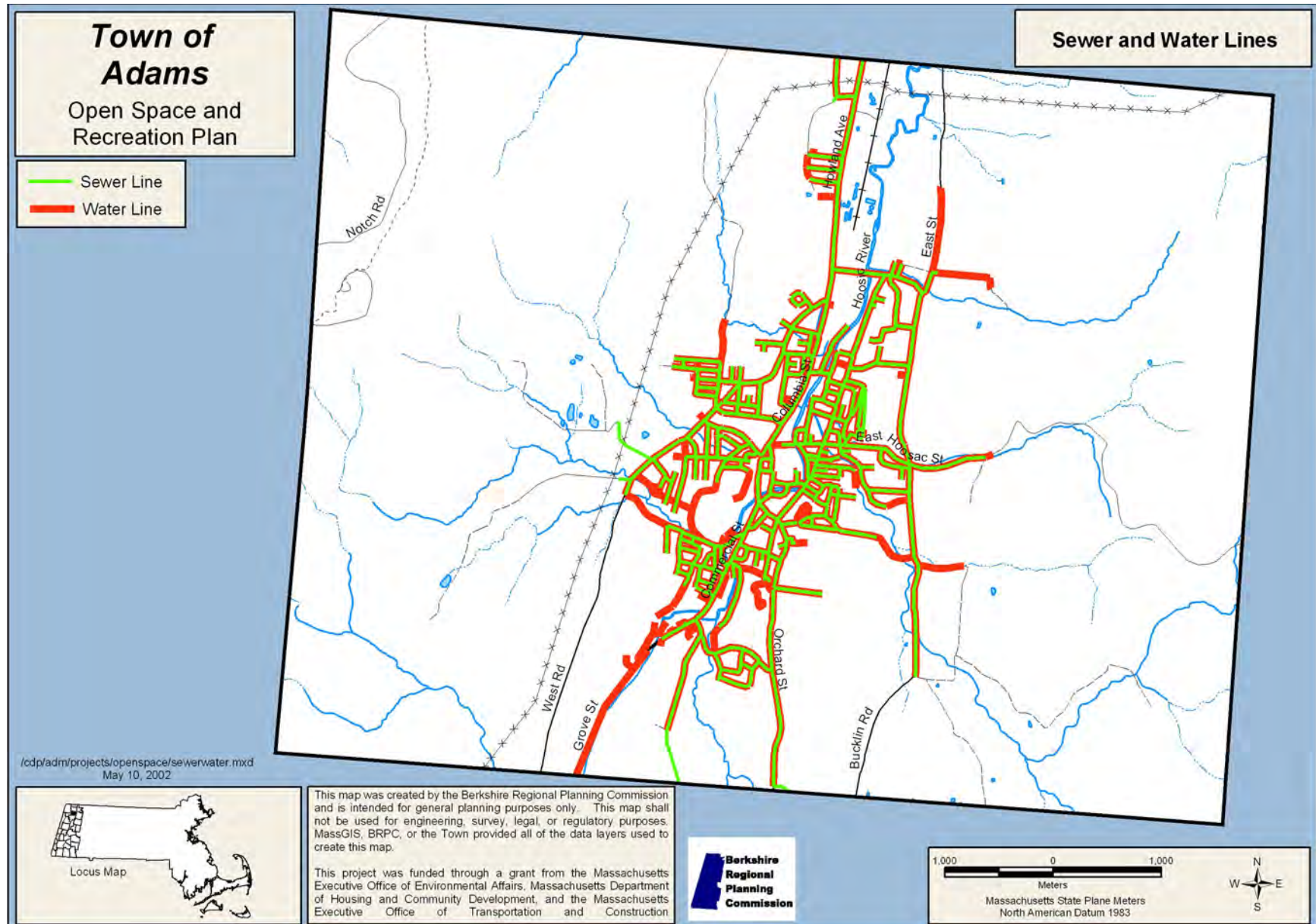
Greater than 90% of the water users in Adams draw their water from the municipal supply. The Adams Fire District draws water from a series of wells in the town of Cheshire. The town draws an average of 1.7 million gallons per day (MGD). It also maintains Bassett Brook Reservoir, a small reservoir in Cheshire as a back-up water source.

The Cheshire Harbor well field is located just off of North Street in the town of Cheshire. This supply consists of three gravel-wall wells and a driven well system. The permitted withdrawal from this source is 2.1 MGD. The average withdrawal is 1.7 MGD. Pump restrictions for the well fields are the result of inadequate power supply and transmission capabilities of water main capacities (Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986, 28).

The Basset Brook supply is located on the westerly side of the Hoosic River, approximately 500 feet east of West Road in Cheshire. A catchment reservoir was constructed across the Brook at this point. The reservoir storage volume is about 2.4 million gallons at an overflow elevation of 1049.42 above mean sea level. In order to maintain suitable pressures in the high elevations served by the system, the reservoir must be kept nearly full. The usable storage volume is about 600,000 gallons. The reservoir has a tributary drainage area of approximately 2.5 square miles, which is largely forested and unpopulated. During dry periods and periods of poor water quality, the Basset Brook supply is augmented by the Cheshire Harbor wells.

About four years ago, Adams tried very hard to implement wellhead protection overlays for its water supply resources. Unfortunately, the Town was unsuccessful in obtaining a positive response to advance these type of protection mechanisms from the Town of Cheshire.

Map 3-1: Sewer and Water Lines



Wastewater and Sewer Systems

The Adams wastewater treatment plant, completed in 1971, is located in the northeast section of Adams on 3.5 acres of land. The system is a separate collection system that collects sanitary and industrial wastes only – stormwater is diverted through a system of drains that empty directly into the Hoosic River and its tributaries.

The treatment plant treats an average 2.18 million gallons of wastewater each day (MGD). The plan has a design capacity of 10.21 MGD and is permitted to treat 3.5 MGD. Demands on the systems are light however since industrial users have declined significantly since the construction of the plant.

Approximately 98% of the commercial and residential units in town are on the sewer system. The remainder use private septic systems. These are located on West Road, West Mountain Road, Gould Road, Notch Road, parts of East Road, East Hoosac Street, Walling Road, East Mountain Road, Burlingame Road and Buckin Road.

Existence and capacity of the water and sewer systems can help encourage re-development and infill development in the already developed areas of town.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications infrastructure has several implications for open space. First are the visual impacts of cellular towers. These are widely considered to be a disruption in the aesthetic value of a scenic or historic viewshed. Also, their location, typically along ridgelines, may interfere with areas that are desirable for open space protection. Secondly, telecommunications facilities are vital to the growing sectors of the economy and necessary for attracting economic development to town.

Adams has one approved cellular tower located at the Burnett Farm on Spring Road. An additional tower has been proposed and is under review by Town boards.

Long-term Development Patterns

The purpose of the Adams Zoning Bylaw is to: “Promote the health, safety, convenience, morals and welfare of the town and its citizens, as authorized by the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 40A (Adams Zoning By-Law 1997).” The zoning bylaw was most recently revised in 2002.

Table 3-5: Adams Zoning Districts

Residence Districts R1: Rural Residential R2: Low Density Residential R3: Medium Density Residential R4: High Density Residential	Business Districts B1: General Business B2: Extensive Business B3: Forest recreation
Industrial Districts I: Industrial IP: Industrial Park	Open Space District OS: Open Space

The boundaries of these districts are shown on *Map 3-2: Current Zoning* (p. 16). The Intensity of Use Schedule provides additional details regarding the land use within the zoning districts.

Table 3-6: Intensity of Use Schedule—For Principal Use

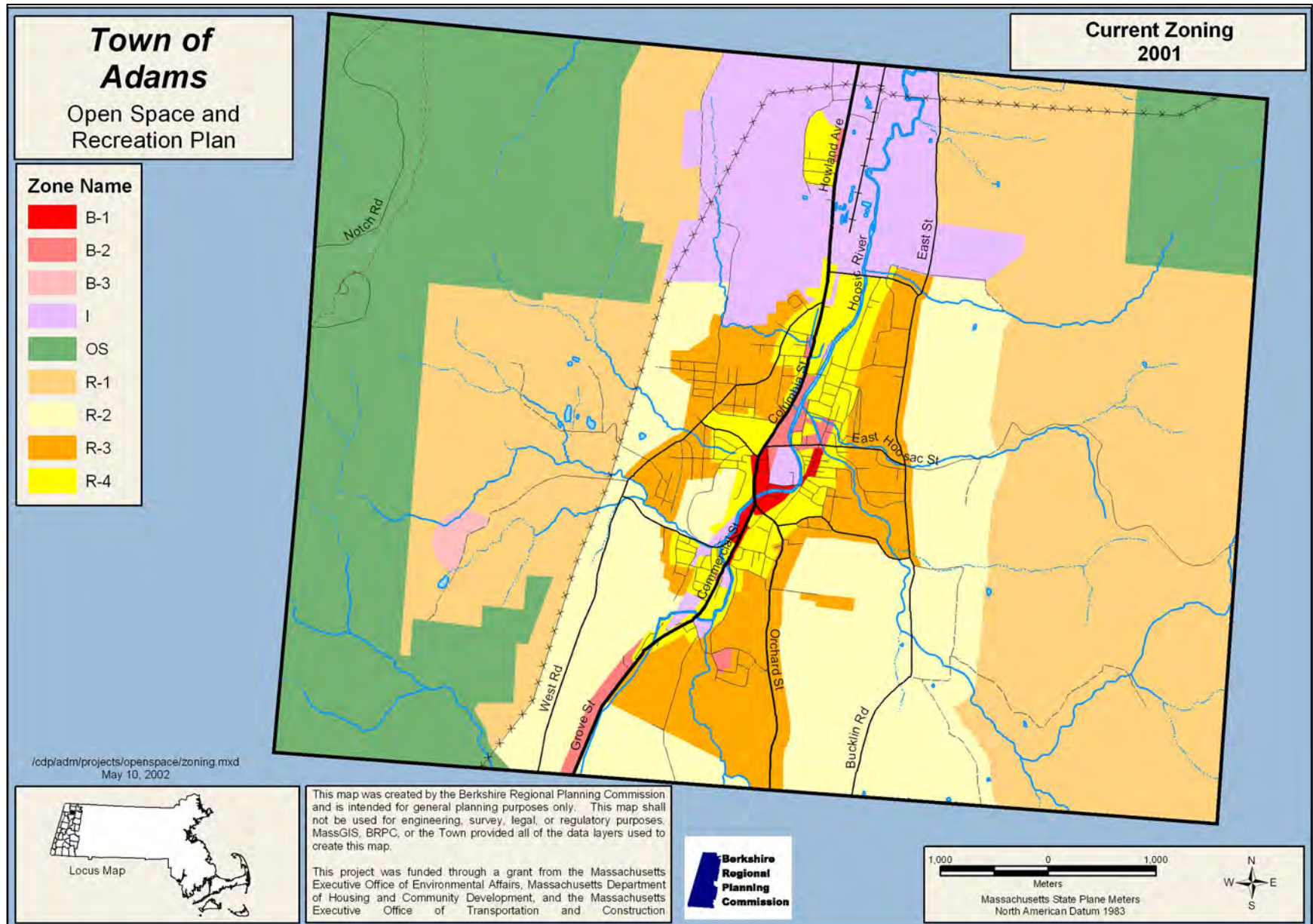
District	Minimum Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Minimum Open Space (%)	Maximum Building Height (ft.)
R-1	43,560	70	30
R-2	21,780	70	30
R-3	12,000	50	30
R-4	10,000	50	30
B-1	0	0	40
B-2	10,000	25	30
B-3	10,000	20	30
IP	43,560	25	40
I	20,000	25	40
OS	2 Acres	85	15

Source: Town of Adams Zoning By-Law 1995

The Town of Adams has two small planned subdivisions, both located in the same general vicinity (see *Map 3-3: Subdivisions* on p. 17). The “Bieniek Avenue Extension,” approximately 5.5 acres large, is located south of Bieniek Avenue and will be subdivided into two lots. The “Town View Lane” subdivision, approximately 60 acres in size, is located west of Bieniek Avenue and south of Fisk Road; this subdivision is expected to have a total of eight lots. The subdivisions should not impact the existing open space of Adams in any significant way. Their location is close to the core development area and could be considered infill to this existing development. The Town’s residential development growth is characterized by 10 to 12 housing starts per year. These developments are largely infill and little forested land or active farmland is being lost to such development.

In 2000, the EOEA through the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission conducted a buildout analysis for Adams based on current zoning. While the buildout analysis indicated a buildout population of 18,840, economic factors including the loss of manufacturing jobs and the limited access by road, rail and air make this scenario

Map 3-2: Current Zoning



Map 3-3: Subdivisions



unlikely. At current rates of development (approximately 25 acres per year), it would take over 150 years or more to achieve buildout based on EOEAs analysis. This would clearly indicate that Adams, at least for the present, is not threatened by development pressure. In fact, additional high quality development in Adams would have a very positive impact on the community. (See *Map 3: Buildable Land* on page 19)

Table 3-7: EOEAs Buildout—Anticipated Impacts

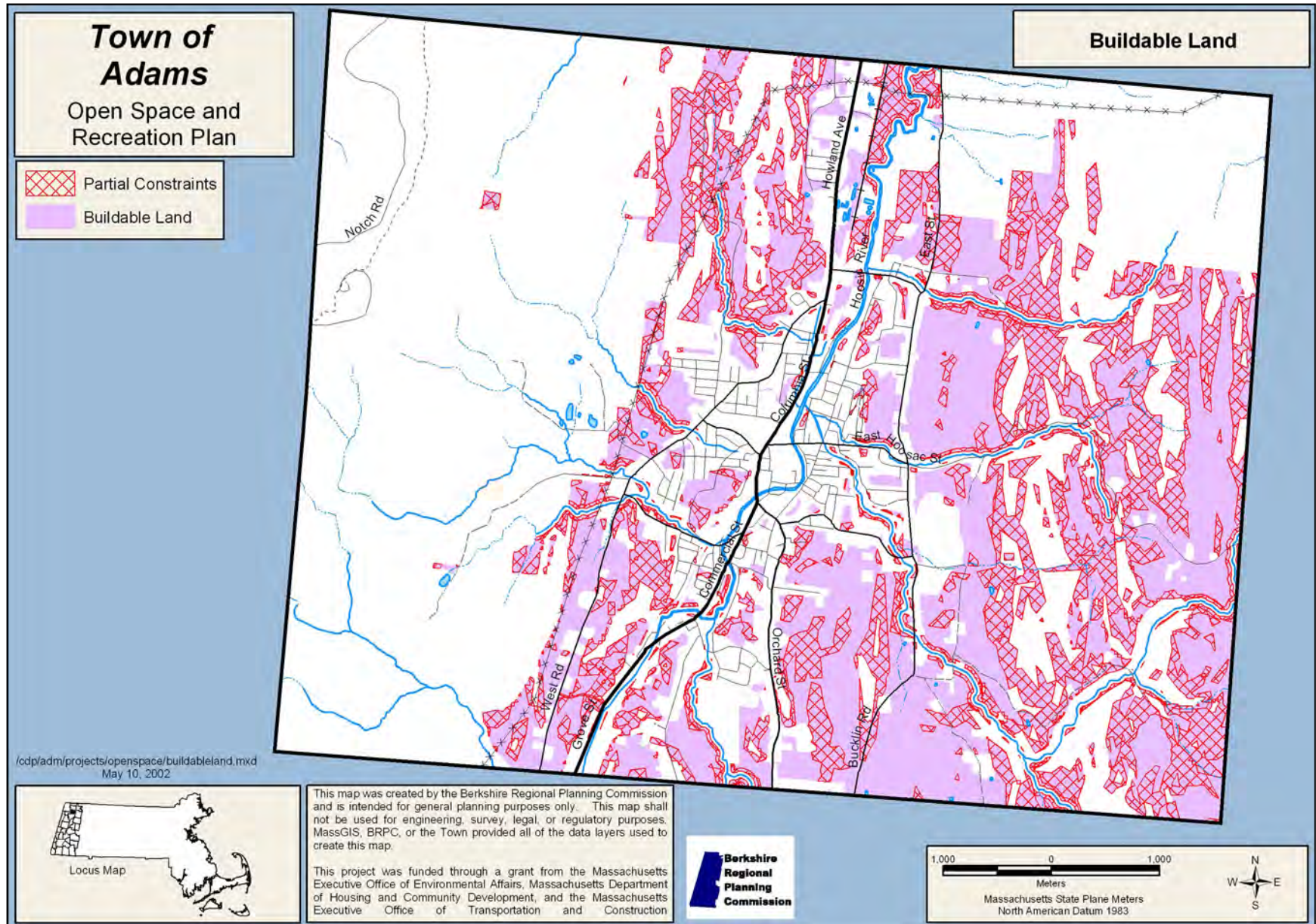
Additional Residents	10,031.00
Additional School Children	1,762.00
Additional Residential Units	4,518.00
Additional Developable Land Area (acres)	2,913.00
Additional Commercial/Industrial Buildable Floor Area (sq ft)	9,275,089.00
Additional Water Demand at Buildout (gallons/day)	1,520,078.00
Residential	808,271.00
Commercial and Industrial	711,807.00
Additional Solid Waste (tons/yr)	4,514.00
Non-Recyclable	3,912.00
Recyclable	602.00
Additional Roadway at Buildout (miles)	45.00

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

A long-term development strategy for Adams has for years revolved around plans for the Greylock Glen. The Glen, now owned by the state, has been the site of a golf course and hotel development and the subject of numerous plans for additional economic and housing development, though none have materialized. More recent Town efforts to become a sustainable community have centered on the site serving as a demonstration for innovative environmental technologies, best practices, and environmental programs. Several public-private ventures have been proposed promoting resort-style development, environmental conference centers, and amenities to promote Adams as an outdoor recreational, tourist destination. All of the development proposals have created significant controversy and have often met opposition from environmental groups. At this time, plans for an environmental center and passive recreation are under consideration by the state (through MassDevelopment).

Adams is pursuing several development projects to enhance and revitalize the Downtown. The first is the extension of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail northward into Adams from Cheshire, and the construction of the Adams Visitors Center along the Trail where it meets Hoosac Street. The proposed new Adams Center for Environmental Excellence (focusing on high-tech training for environmental concerns) will be built in the vacant Jones Block (c. 1896) on Park Street, the Town's "Main Street." In implementing its economic development strategy, the Town has been assisted by MassDevelopment, particularly, in the development of the Visitors Center and the environmental center to be located at Greylock Glen, and redevelopment of the Jones Block.

Map 3-4: Buildable Land



SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENTAL INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

GEOLOGY, SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

Natural History of the Hoosic River Valley

The breathtaking setting of Adams, its long, narrow river valley with dramatic surrounding mountains, has evolved over a fantastically long time frame and owes its current shape and constitution to a wide array of events. The geological story of this area involves an ancient tropical sea, wrenching continental collisions, and crushing ice sheets.

Six hundred million years ago, the region now occupied by Berkshire County lay along the shore of the Proto-Atlantic Ocean, an ocean that preceded what is today the Atlantic Ocean. The material deposits that accumulated on the shore of this ancient warm sea are key components of the mountains and valleys. The combined effects of extremely high heat and pressure over great lengths of time transformed the shore's sand into today's quartzite bedrock. The deeper ocean silt and muck similarly hardened into shale and then into schist and gneiss, while shellfish remains became sedimentary rock limestone.

About 500 million years ago, enormous shifts in the Earth's plates pushed the European continent westward, thrusting the ocean floor and island masses into the eastern side of the North American plate. The massive force of this collision formed today's north-south Appalachian and Taconic mountain ranges, including the Berkshire Hills, thought to have once reached a height of 20,000 feet. Meanwhile, extreme subterranean pressure and accompanying high temperatures transformed the ocean deposits into quartzite, schist, gneiss and limestone, with portions of the limestone hardening into marble. Thrust faults commonly accompanied the intense buckling of these upsurging mountains; one such fault exists today, running north-south through the Hoosic Valley. These new, high mountains were next pared down by the ceaseless action of erosion. Wind, water and ice trimmed back the hills and sculpted valleys by removing the softer formations such as limestone, leaving the hard schist mountain ridges.

Over the last two million years, Earth has seen its most radical fluctuations in temperature. There have been as many as 16 glacial cycles descending from the north. These glaciers were the most important acting agent for carving the land down to the shape it is today. The enormous ice sheets, in some places a half-mile deep, scoured and gauged out valleys, smoothing and rounding Adams' surrounding hills while grinding, mixing and depositing the loose debris to form today's till soils. The most recent glacial event, known as the Wisconsin Ice Age, created a blockage, which resulted in the formation of Lake Bascom, entirely covering areas now known as the Hoosic and Green River Valleys. The churning action of this glacier lake deposited sand, which mixed with glacial till, acting as upland groundwater recharge areas. About 13,000 years ago, the last great ice sheets retreated to the north, the blockage which held the waters of Bascom Lake broke, draining the lake and allowing plants and animals to move in from the south.

Following this event, the Hoosic River has been the primary agent of geologic change in the Hoosic River Valley, slowly depositing eroded mineral silts on the valley floodplains.

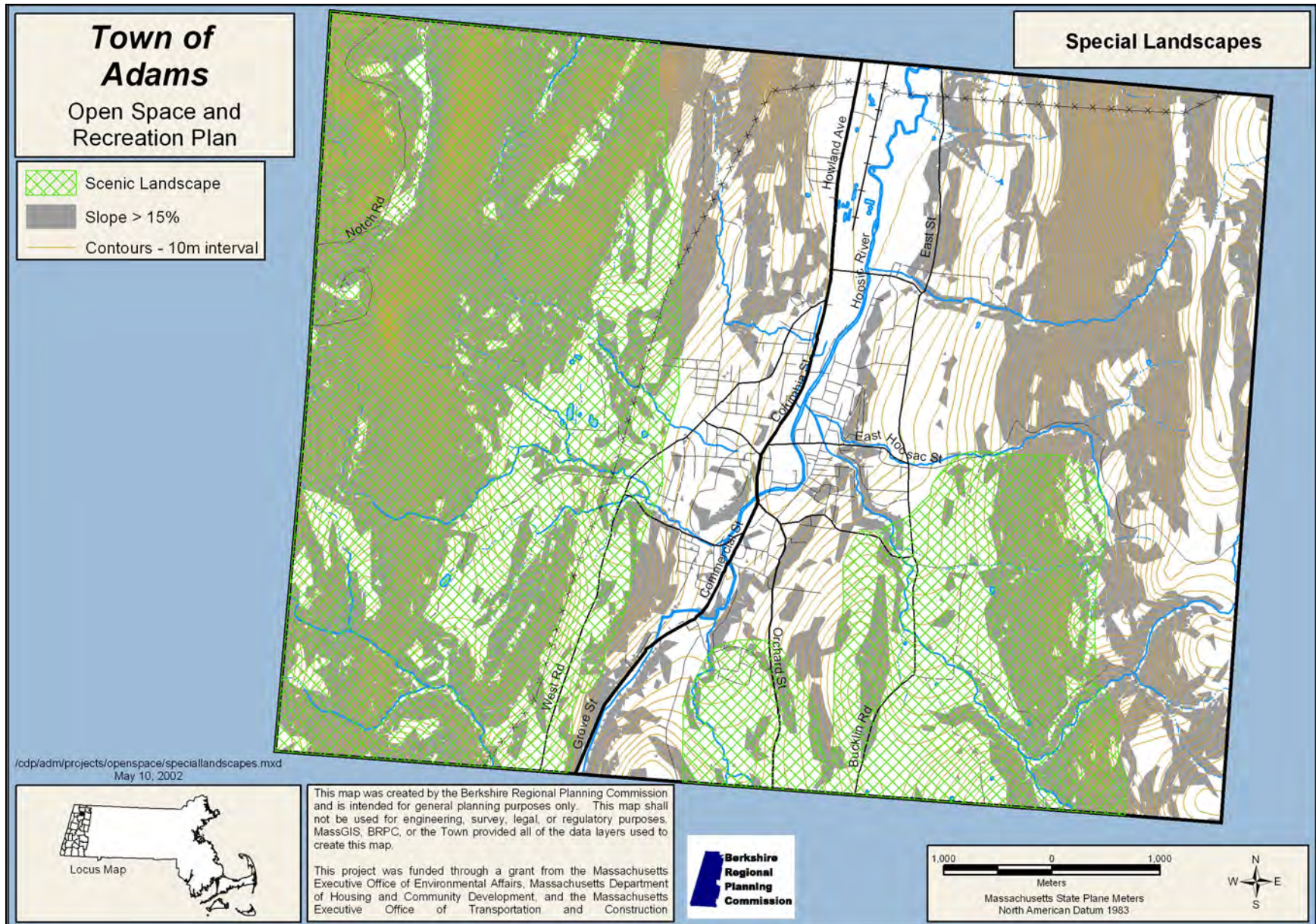
After the glacial age, the Berkshire region was first succeeded by tundra vegetation, followed by a scattering of cold-hardy trees such as poplars, spruces, birches, Jack pines and balsam firs. With time, a closed mixed forest community prevailed. More recently, about 12,000 years ago, Native American tribes as well as a large variety of animal species established themselves in the area. Major extinction soon followed across the continent, however, primarily eliminating large mammals such as the mammoth, mastodon, horse and possibly the saber-toothed cat. Although archeological evidence in New England is inconclusive, it is presumed by experts that these great mammals were hunted to extinction. The Native Americans developed agriculture relatively late, and their impact on the land in New England was minimal. European colonists dramatically altered the landscape, clearing nearly three quarters of southern New England forest for farmland during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and driving out many of the large animals such as caribou and elk. After Adams' settlements in the 1750s, areas that were level enough to till were cleared for agricultural use, while the steep uplands were extensively cut for the production of charcoal. During the western migration of the mid-1800s, New England suffered widespread abandonment of agriculture for the promise of industrialization and superior mid-western farmlands. Woodlands and wildlife have reclaimed large tracts of the eastern forests, reestablishing much of the Town's natural habitat. Populations of moose, black bear, and beaver are steadily on the rise.

Topography

Adams has tremendously varied topography (See *Map 4-1: Special Landscapes Map* on page 22.). From the valley elevation of 760 feet above sea level, the land rises steeply to the west, reaching the summit of Mount Greylock, the tallest peak in southern New England, at 3,491 feet. The more gradually sloping Hoosac Range framing the eastern edge of the valley reaches a height of 2,400 feet. The valley's mean width is only about one-half mile. The slopes of the Hoosac Range are regular, broken only by steep V-shaped stream gullies. The Greylock Range has steeper slopes with shoulders, outcroppings and false summits. Just below the peak of Greylock is an area of recurring landslides that is visible from the valley as a patch of scarred land. Many of the narrow, V-shaped stream channels that descend the steep mountain slopes are vulnerable to erosion from rapid runoff. The Hoosic River Valley's eastern watershed drains into the Hoosic River via the Chesboro, Southwick, Tophet, Reed and Patton Brooks, and Anthony Creek. Similarly, the Notch, Hoxie, Pecks and Bassett Brooks channel runoff from the Greylock slopes to the Hoosic River. The lowlands experience a significant level of siltation, particularly from upstream storm erosion. In the center of town, the Hoosic River has been channelized with concrete to alleviate the threat of damaging floods such as those experienced in the 1930s. As the river winds its way northward through the valley and into the city of North Adams, its floodplain widens.

Clearly, the large extent of steep topography in Adams is a major restriction for development. Areas with a slope of 25 percent or more are generally considered

Map 4-1: Special Landscapes



undevelopable, without special construction measures. Steep slopes may experience serious erosion problems if vegetation is removed. Forest activities must be carefully planned and managed in order to avoid these conditions.

Soils of Adams

The soil formations of Adams are primarily the result of glacial action. The enormous force of giant ice sheets scraped-up and mixed together a variety of soil particles, ranging from fine clays and silts to sand rubble and mixed rocks. This variegated soil mixture is called glacial till. The glacial Lake Bascom was responsible for enriching much of the valley's soils, having accumulated deep layers of mineral and organic material, in some places as much as 20 feet deep. Most recently, the Hoosic River has helped to improve the valley floor with rich alluvial deposits. These fine clays and silts are continuously eroded from the hills by the action of fast-running streams, and are left to settle on the riverbanks and floodplains. The channeling of the Hoosic River has considerably tapered this activity.

The following section is a breakdown of the soils of Adams in three general associations, named for the soil series. It provides useful distinctions for directing general land use and open space plans. For small-scale land use decisions, more precise and detailed information can be located through the Soil Conservation Service. Because the town of Adams has a large-capacity, centralized sewage system, soil drainage and suitability for septic fields is not a major development restriction.

According to the USDA Soil Conservation Service Soil Survey for Berkshire County, the soils of Adams fall under three general soil associations. Within each association, soils can differ considerably with regard to variations in slope, depth, stoniness, drainage, and other physical characteristics. Soils largely reflect the parent materials of their underlying bedrock, thus closely resembling the area's surficial geology. Following is a brief description of each soil association represented in the town of Adams. (Tables 4-1 through 4-3) Included in this is a discussion of the general topographical characteristics of each association as it is found in Adams, the general uses that these areas currently occupy, limitations inherent in each type or association, and the most suitable potential use or uses for each. The Soils Map (*Map 4-2* on page 26) shows specific development limitations.

Table 4-1: Association 1—Tunbridge-Lyman-Peru

Description	Gently to steeply sloped terrain on hilltops and hillsides. Areas of rock outcrop are common. This association makes up more than half of the town. The steeply sloped Greylock complex and its foothills to the west of downtown as well as the Berkshire Hills to the east of town consist of these soils. Generally, the soils are well to excessively drained. The soils are somewhat shallow and are formed from deposits of glacial till derived from schist bedrock.
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Current Use	Most of this area is forested. State Forests, camping grounds, and other recreation areas occupy much of the area. A few small dairy farms also are located here.
Limitations Limitations (continued)	The steep, stony, rocky soils in this area impose severe limitations on urban, and industrial development. The soils are poorly suited to cultivated crops and hay or pasture due to surface stones and rock outcrops. These areas are on the periphery of town and are not suited to on-site waste disposal (septic systems) due to the shallowness to bedrock.
Potential Use	These areas are best suited to the development of recreational activities.

Table 4-2: Association 2—Amenia-Pittsfield-Farmington

Description	Rolling hills with level areas and moderately sloped areas. This soil association makes up less than one-third of Adams. It runs from the north to south borders and between the central valley and the foothills on both sides of town. Soils in this series are somewhat deep and well drained. They are formed in thick deposits of glacial till derived from limestone bedrock.
Current Use	Most of this general soil area has been cleared of forest and is used for agricultural, residential, and urban purposes. Much of the Specialty Minerals lime mine is located here.
Limitations	These soils are fairly well suited to cultivated crops, hay and pasture. Most construction projects should encounter few limitations that cannot be overcome, such as laying tile drainage around foundations in the more wet areas.
Potential Use	This soil area has the best potential in Adams for residential and industrial development. Preservation of agricultural land is important.

Table 4-3: Association 3—Copake-Hero-Hoosic

Description	Level to gently rolling soils. This association makes up the central valley from the north to south borders and occupies the floodplains of the Hoosic River. The soils are well to excessively drained and calcareous, loamy, to gravelly. They formed in calcareous glacial outwash.
Current Use	About three-quarters of this soil's area in Adams is used for urban and industrial purposes. The remainder consists of a few small farms and woodland and wildlife areas.
Limitations	With the exception of the flood plain areas, this soil association has slight limitations for agriculture due to the droughtiness and rapid permeability of the substratum. The flood plain zones constitute a hazard that imposes severe limitations for urban and industrial uses and the soils are highly erodible. These soils are generally good for urban and industrial uses.

Potential Use	This area has potential for a source of groundwater for industrial uses, but the current land uses in this area are not conducive to drinking water supplies. The area is also a good source of glacial sand and gravel deposits.
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LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The town of Adams features a very distinctive portion of the Hoosic River Valley, articulated by some of the highest ridges in the region, including the Greylock Range to the west and the Hoosac Range to the East. The rich alluvial soils of the mid and lower transitional slopes were well-suited for historic agricultural uses, while the village settlement followed a pattern typical of New England mill towns, with major development confined to the valley floor along the Hoosic River. The steep slopes and ridgelines that encompass the valley, by contrast, are predominantly tree-covered, providing a panorama of scenic vistas from the village, including some of the Commonwealth's most picturesque mountain scenery (DEM 1982, 215). See *Map 4-1: Special Landscapes* on page 22.

While land uses have changed considerably with the decline of industrial growth, Adams has managed to maintain its traditional development pattern, lending an authentic historic quality to the town. To uphold the charm that the village's clustered nature imparts on the character of Adams, it is important for development to remain condensed, for the open space surrounding the village to be maintained, and for the steep-slope woodland coverage and vistas to be preserved.

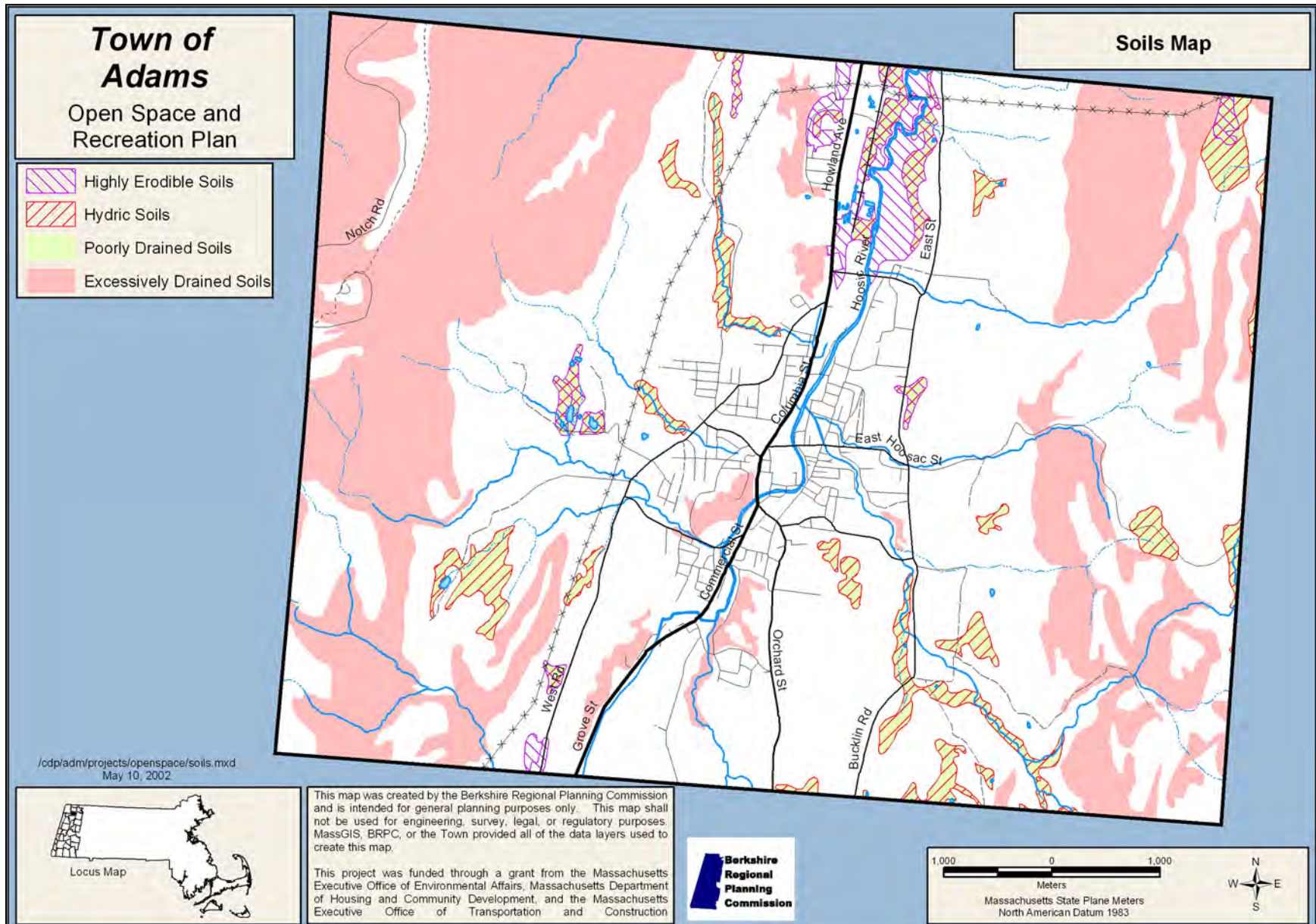
WATER RESOURCES

Surface Water

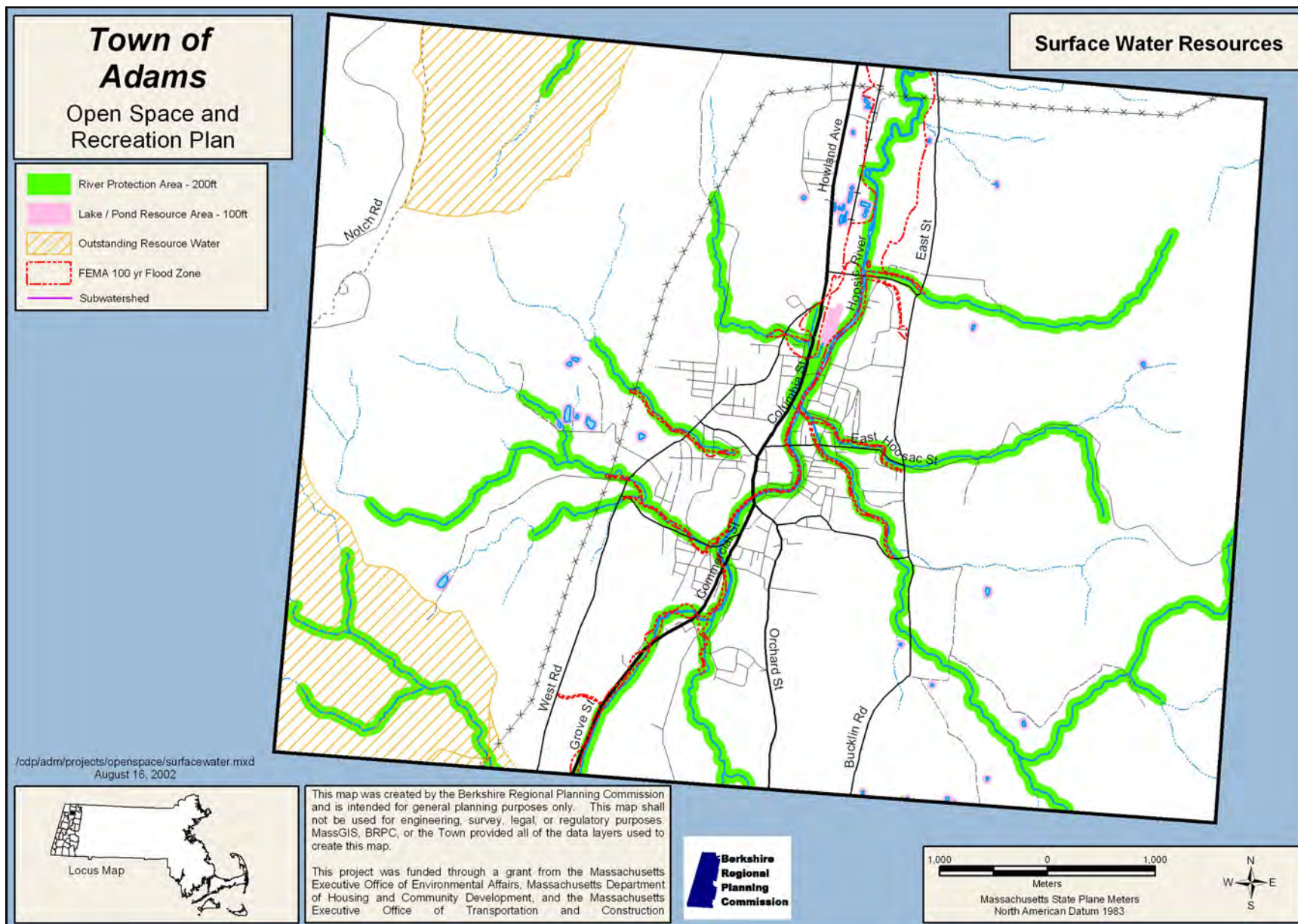
The Hoosic River is the dominant water feature and the backbone of water runoff in the town of Adams. (See *Map 4-3: Surface Water Resources* on page 27.) According to the Department of Environmental Protection, the river does not meet the criteria for a Class B: "Fishable and Swimmable River." Predominantly, this is due to pathogen contamination. Since there are no wastewater treatment plants above the Adams plant on the north end of town, the source of pathogens to the river is most likely nonpoint source pollution.

The River runs through the center of town and was channeled in the 1950s by the Army Corps of Engineers, as a flood prevention measure. While the channeled portion is not suitable for water recreation, it does provide a distinctive corridor that is ideal for a bike path or greenway connection between the northern and southern sections of town. (Also, the railroad track/trail runs along most of it.) Above and below the flood control chutes

Map 4-2: Soils



Map 4-3: Surface Water Resources



and within the tributaries, the surface waters are suitable to “catch and release” fishing and passive recreation.

The Hoosic River Ecosystem Partnership Project is an effort of ten local, state and federal partners who are pursuing remediation in the flood control chutes by creating a more natural substrate and stream form within the chutes. A restored riverbed is hoped to enhance coldwater fisheries habitat and to make the river a more appealing feature of Downtown Adams.

The Hoosic River joins with several tributaries in Adams. On the east side of town are, from north to south, the Cheesboro, Southwick, Miller, Reed, Tophet, and Patton Brooks; on the west side are the Hoxie and Bassett Brooks.

The town of Adams has several privately owned water resource areas:

- Anthony’s Pool: This pond is located on a thirteen-acre site with picnic facilities, a dance pavilion, refreshment stand, toilet facilities and a twelve-unit bath house. The facility has been closed to the public since 1978, but once was a popular attraction for town locals. The pond is situated in a beautiful agricultural setting at the foot of Greylock Glen.
- Bellevue Falls: Located on a one-acre site that lacks formal facilities and has limited access.
- Grey Rock: A one-acre site with no formal facilities and limited, rugged access. This site is primarily used for swimming and fishing
- Peck’s Falls: The falls are situated on a two-acre site that is easily accessible. While there are no formal facilities, the site provides a beautiful setting for swimming, picnicking and passive recreation.
- Peck’s Pond: A six-acre site used for private water and power.

In addition to these, there are two privately owned swimming areas along the Tophet Brook, known locally as Flat Rock and Big Basin.

Flood Hazard Area

The general boundaries of the Flood Plain District are shown on the Adams Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), dated August 1, 1983, as Zones A, A1-30, to indicate the 100-year flood plain. These areas run along the Hoosic River, from north to south, with the widest area located on the northern section of the river. These areas are delineated on *Map 4-3: Surface Water Resources* on page 27.

The Hoosic is a fast-draining river that rises and falls rapidly during storms. It collects its water from steep, rocky mountain streams. It is the nature of the river to produce flash floods. For years, the river was prone to devastating floods until the Army Corps of Engineers built the familiar concrete flood control chutes in the 1950s. Though unattractive and unfortunately located in the heart of town, the flood control chutes do a remarkable job of preventing floods.

Wetlands

The condition of wetland areas is inextricably linked to the well being of public and private water quality, ground water supplies, flood control efforts, storm damage control, prevention of pollution, protection of land containing shellfish, protection of fisheries, and protection of wildlife habitat (Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act 1972). However, there are few wetlands in Adams, including bordering vegetative wetlands, riverfront areas, ponds and floodplain. Each type is characterized by the amount of water present in the soil (level of saturation), on the surface, and how much of the year the water is present.

The Natural Resources Assessment Group (NRAG) of the University of Massachusetts completed the most recent wetland mapping for the Hoosic Watershed in 1997. NRAG performed original photointerpretation, delineated the wetlands and deepwater habitats and conducted field surveys on a limited number of sites. The results show that wetlands make up less than 3% of the Hoosic watershed and less than 1% of Adams.

Adams' wetlands are primarily riverine and palustrine wetlands associated with perennial rivers and streams. Riverine wetlands can be found near a river or stream, and may contain any number of plant species depending on the nature of the soil and the local climate. The vegetative character of these areas could be shrub and scrub, or broad-leaved deciduous. Palustrine wetlands are characterized by lowland areas that may be wet for part or all of the year. These areas may have water flowing through the site during any season.

The Surface Water Resources Map included in this Open Space and Recreation Plan is a compilation of data generated from National Wetland Inventory the US Geological Survey and MassGIS Land Use data.

Aquifer Recharge Areas

Based on the US Geological Survey 1:48,000 hydrologic atlas series on groundwater favorability, there are high-yield and medium yield aquifers that run along the Hoosic River from downtown, north into North Adams. The aquifers appear on the Dinking Water Resources Map. Much of the land use in this area is urban, industrial, and dense residential and not conducive to developing large-scale potable water supplies. However, some undeveloped floodplain areas exist where well development could proceed if additional protective measures were applied, such as bunkered wellfields. Industrial uses

of water withdrawn from these aquifers should not be negatively impacted by the existing land uses.

Watersheds

There are five major watersheds in Berkshire County; these are the: Housatonic, Hoosic, Deerfield, Westfield, and Farmington Rivers. These watersheds cover a vast area and include 106 lakes, ponds, and reservoirs throughout the county. The Hoosic River Watershed encompasses several towns in northwestern Massachusetts, including nearly all of Adams. The Hoosic is part of the greater Hudson River Watershed. An average of 15.3 million gallons of water per day travel through the Hoosic River Watershed. Only a small, forested area of Adams lies in the Deerfield Watershed. This land pertains to the Savoy State forest.

The Hoosic River is composed of the Main Stem, South Branch, North Branch, Green River and many smaller tributaries. The North Branch begins in Readsborough, Vermont, and flows southerly through Stamford, Vermont, into Clarksburg, Massachusetts. The river continues in a southwesterly direction until joining the South Branch in North Adams. The headwaters of the South Branch rise as far south as Pittsfield, flowing into the Cheshire Reservoir in Cheshire, and then northward through Adams to its confluence with the North Branch in North Adams. From this point, the Main Stem travels west through Williamstown (Adams 1986, 11). The Hoosic River leaves Massachusetts and travels northwesterly through Vermont and New York to enter the Hudson at Stillwater, NY.

The Hoosic River's water quality classification was upgraded in 1984 to class B. Class B waters are supposed to be safe for fishing and swimming, but not for drinking, according to the Department of Environmental Protection. However, the river fails to support that designation through most of its length due primarily to pathogen contamination.

Municipal Water

The Adams Fire District maintains a two million gallon storage tank that was constructed in 1992 on the west side of Town. Water supplied to this storage tank comes from the District's well field.

Bassett Reservoir, closed in 1993 through a State mandate, remains on emergency standby.

The Adams Fire District's water supply consists of three (3) gravel packed wells. Well #4 is considered the District's main source. It will satisfy 100% of the town's needs. This well is 81 feet deep and has a yield of 2.3 million gallons per day at a rate of 1,600 gallons per minute. Well #3 is 101 feet deep and has a yield of 2 million gallons per day at a rate of 1,350 gallons per minute. Well #2A is primarily a back-up well for well #3

and #4. It is 87 feet deep and has a yield of 800,000 gallons per day at a rate of 800 gallons per minute.

To efficiently distribute water to higher elevations, Adams has three booster stations: one at the intersection of Quaker Street and Notch Road, another at the intersection of Upper East Hoosac Street and East Road, and a third at the intersection of Glenn Street and Orchard Street (Adams Conservation Commission 1980).

In 1985, the town employed the company of Fay, Spofford and Thorndike, Inc. to prepare a report of the water supply and distribution facilities of the Adams Fire District. The items they considered in establishing water requirements included: population served; domestic, commercial, industrial and agricultural usage; unaccounted-for usage (leakage, main flushing, etc.) and flows for fire protection service (Fay, Spofford and Thorndike, Inc. 1985, 2). They determined that the population of the town of Adams had been steadily declining, and according to town officials, this continues to occur. Land use patterns have not changed significantly since 1985, and commercial development has not been extensive.

Potential future development will alter the amount of water usage within town limits, but developers are responsible for all connections to the water and sewer systems. Since the closing of Bassett Reservoir and the implementation of the Cheshire wells, residents have expressed that the water quality is not as good, but there remains an ample supply for the town, its businesses, and reasonable growth. Fay, Spofford and Thorndike projected that by the year 2000, the maximum daily average (130 percent of average day) water requirements will be 2.81 million gallons. The aquifer system that supplies the well field is extensive and has proven to be very productive (FST 1985, 17). Improvements made to the pumping system have ensured that the wells will be able to effectively supply the Town's water for many future decades.

The public water supplies are noted on *Map 4-4: Drinking Water Resources* on page 31.

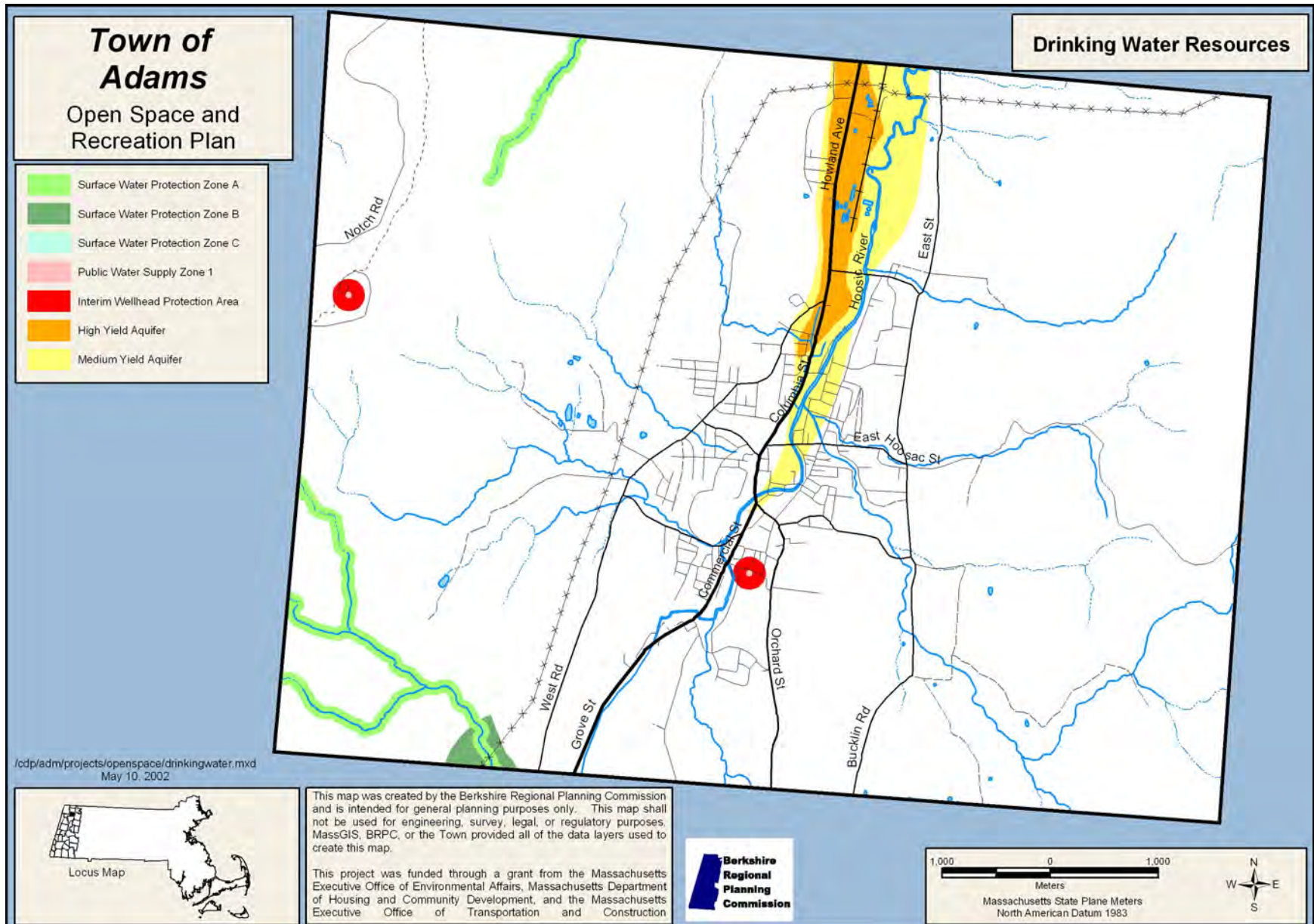
VEGETATION

General Inventory

Forest has slowly reclaimed the areas of Adams where old agricultural fields had been abandoned. This process has been common in New England over the past 150 years, when much of the nation's agricultural output moved west. This has had a positive effect on the habitats of many species dependent on forest cover and increased successional growth. Eastern white pine, a common successional species, is found in many of Adams' abandoned fields. It seldom succeeds itself except after major disturbance such as fires, wind throw, or human disturbance (Eyre 1980, 25). Existing agriculture lands in Adams are primarily pasture, hay land, and row crops.

A community that supports timber production, agriculture, industry, clean water, fishing, hunting, wildlife watching, passive and active recreation must manage its forests and

Map 4-4: Drinking Water Resources



fields with a careful and balanced approach. Every activity mentioned depends on a healthy ecosystem. The natural cycle of life, inherent in every ecological process, should be fostered in an open space plan. Natural disturbances should be minimized and creative solutions and partnerships formed to move Adams towards a sustainable future.

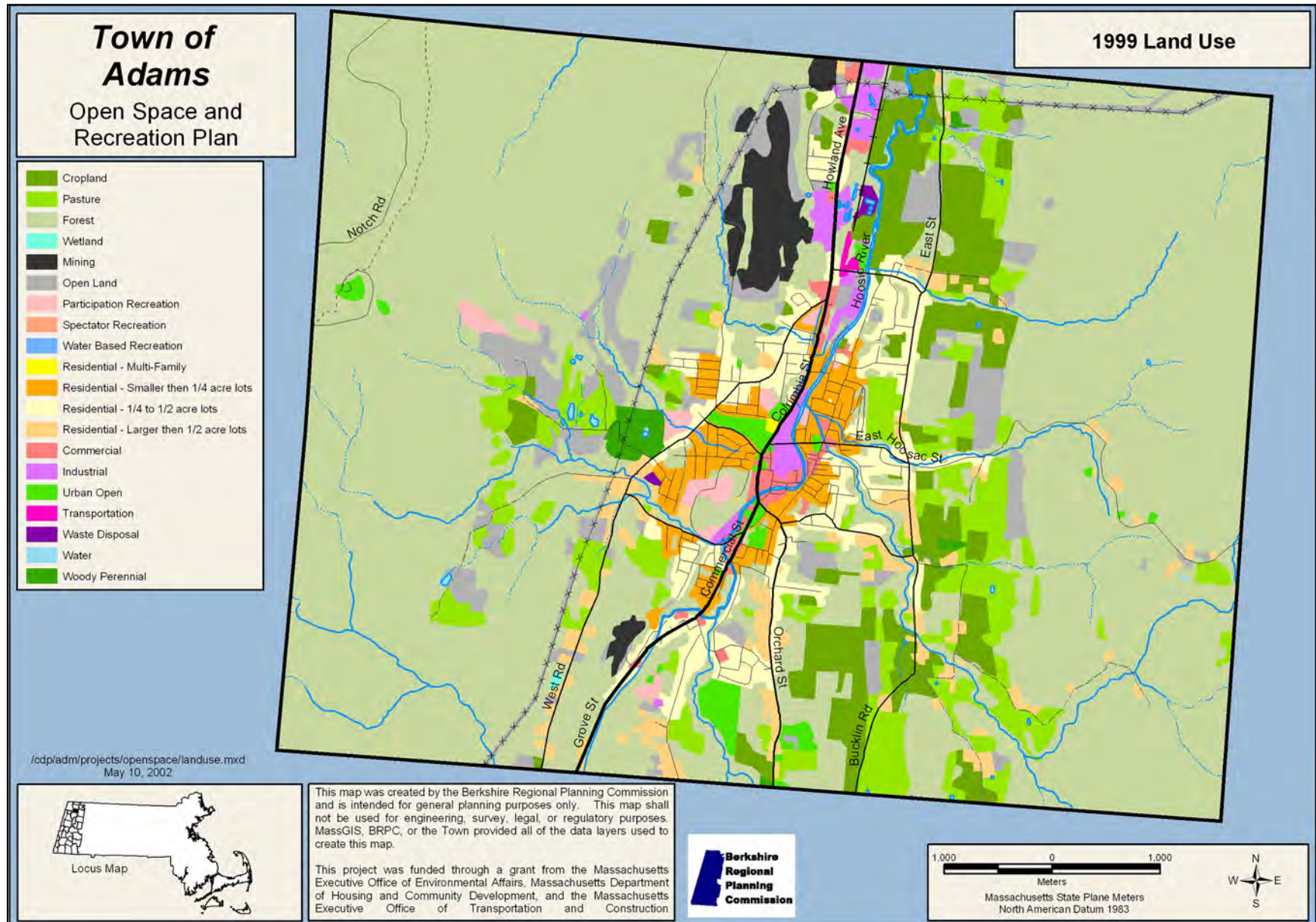
Forest Land

The town of Adams has a varied landscape of large and small forest patches, open fields, and developed areas. Sweeping vistas reveal an undulating terrain, rich with thriving vegetation types. Like much of the vegetation cover of New England, Adams' forests are regenerating from widespread clearing during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for fuel, building materials, tools, and industrial expansion. Of the town's 14,384 acres, approximately 9,551 acres or 66% are classified as forest. (See *Map 4-5: 1999 Land Use* on page 34.) Predominately a cool and moist climate, Adams' forest consists of 58 percent hardwoods (over 80 percent deciduous), 32 percent mixed hardwoods and softwoods (dominated by hardwoods), and 7 percent abandoned field vegetation (*Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986*, 13).

Northern forest species became established in the Adams area after the recession of the Wisconsin Glacier, 10,000 years ago. The predominant hardwood species include sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), white birch (*Betula papyrifera*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), and white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) (*Natural Resources Planning Program 1980*, 36). Sugar maples make up the majority of deciduous tree species in the area; this can be an indication of a maturing forest (Eyre 1980, 30). Once a sugar maple occupies a dominant canopy position, it may live as long as 400 years, providing seeds and shelter for wildlife. Their deep roots extract nutrients from lower soils and transports them to their leaves. Their fallen leaves are rich in magnesium, calcium, and potassium; they break down easily, returning nutrients to the top layers of soil. This cycle, called "nutrient pumping," provides rich nourishment for plant growth and wildlife foraging (Benyus 1989, 240–41). Common undergrowth vegetation includes the wildflowers spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), large flowered trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*), marsh blue violet (*Viola cucullata*), and sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza claytoni*).

Softwood (coniferous) stands, including eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), and red spruce (*Picea rubens*), make up only three percent of Adams' forested land. Eastern hemlock is the most common softwood species found in Adams, often mixed with northern hardwoods, or found in pure stands along streams and wetlands. Hemlocks thrive in cool, moist valleys on east and north facing slopes. A common under story species due to its shade tolerance (it can live with as little as five percent of full sunlight), hemlock has become an important part of the climax forest type in the area (Eyre 1980, 27; *Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986*, 13). This species is threatened across the northeast, by the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, an insect that sucks sap at the base of the needles and can eventually kill a living tree.

Map 4-5: 1999 Land Use



Ownership of the town's forested land is 56 percent private. The remaining 44 percent is owned by the town of Adams, the city of North Adams, and the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources (*Natural Resources Planning Program 1980*, 36). Comprehensive land management of Adams' forests is needed to insure a healthy ecosystem. Private land owners need to work with the town and state to determine a set of mutually agreed-upon management goals. Instead of simply managing the forest with regard to its timber output, desired future conditions of the forest must be carefully examined. Balancing the needs for conservation and timber harvesting has historically proven to be a challenge due to home rule, and to the increasing number of landowners in Massachusetts. However, an increasingly sophisticated knowledge base and improving set of conservation incentive programs provides hope that public and private land planning and management will become more efficient and seamless. When creating a forest management plan, a community and private landowners must think about how it relates to and affects the surrounding ecosystem over time. Recommendations for protection and enhancement of forest habitat can be found in Section 8.

Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species

As the tallest mountain in Massachusetts, Mount Greylock exhibits some sub alpine climate characteristics, including types of plant species and stunted vegetative growth. The threatened mountain cranberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) can be found in patches near the mountain's summit (*Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986*, 15). Another rare plant species, the hairy wood mint (*Blephilia hirsuta*), can be found in the Mount Greylock Reservation.

The following list of rare and endangered species comes from the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. The State Rank indicates, Special Concern (SC) species are natives that have suffered a decline which could threaten the species, or have a small number, limited distribution, or specialized habitat; Threatened (T) species are likely to become endangered in the future; Endangered (E) species are in danger of extinction. The Biological Resources Map (*Map 4-6* on page 36) indicates the approximate distribution of these species in Adams.

Table 4-4: Rare and Endangered Species of Vegetation

Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank	Most Recent Observation
<i>Acer nigrum</i>	Black Maple	SC	1986
<i>Amelanchier bartramiana</i>	Bartram's Shadbush	T	1999
<i>Arabis laevigata</i>	Smooth Rock-Cress	T	1986
<i>Blephilia hirsuta</i>	Hairy Wood-Mint	E	1995
<i>Carex baileyi</i>	Bailey's Sedge	E	1995
<i>Carex hitchcockiana</i>	Hitchcock's Sedge	SC	1918
<i>Carex tetanica</i>	Fen Sedge	SC	1995
<i>Conioselinum chinense</i>	Hemlock Parsley	SC	1982
<i>Equisetum scirpoides</i>	Dwarf Scouring-Rush	SC	1998

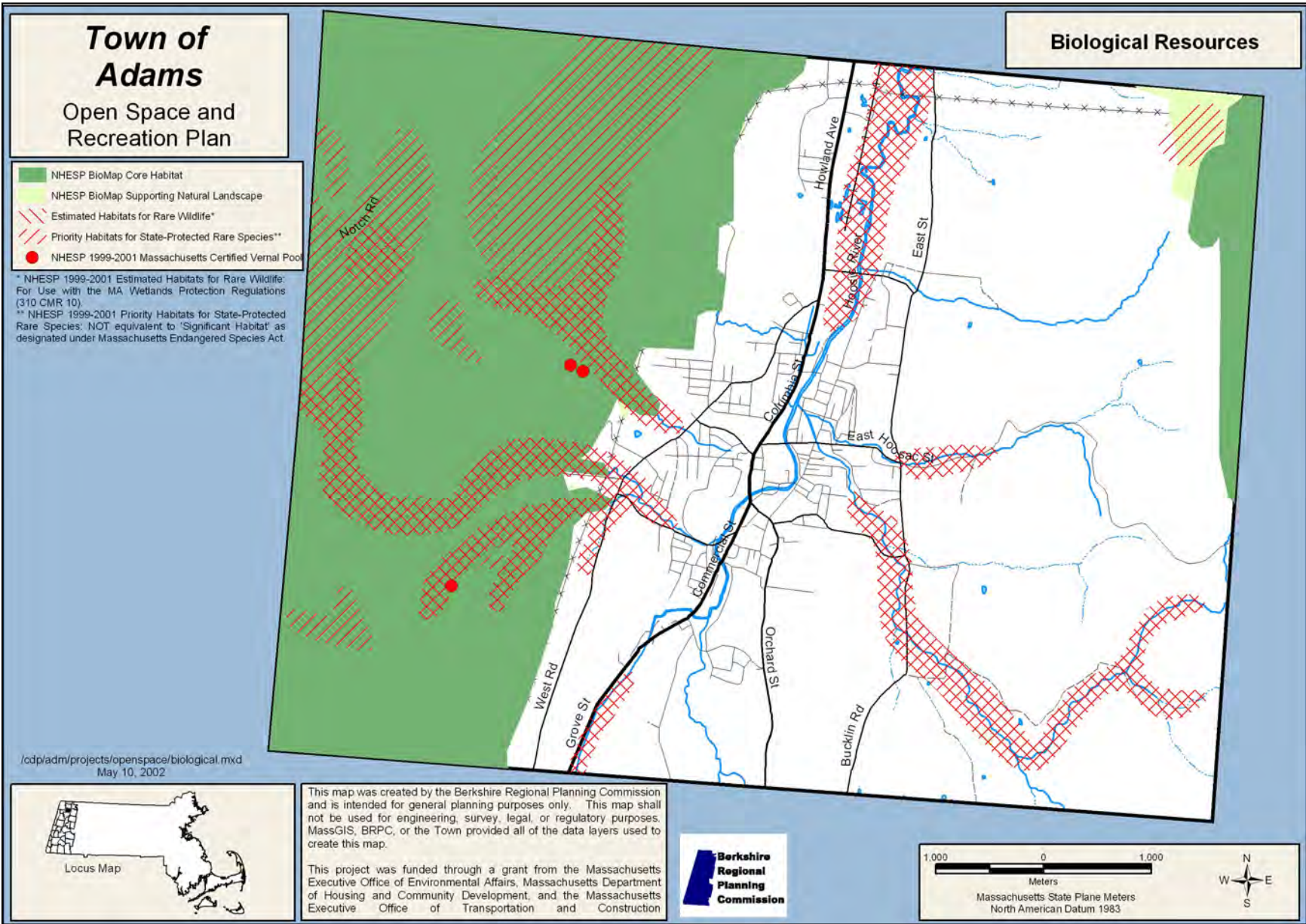
Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank	Most Recent Observation
<i>Galium boreale</i>	Northern Bedstraw	E	1995
<i>Huperzia appalachiana</i>	Appalachian Clubmoss	E	1909
<i>Luzula parviflora</i> ssp <i>melanocarpa</i>	Black-Fruited Woodrush	E	1999
<i>Malaxis brachypoda</i>	White Adder's-Mouth	T	
<i>Milium effusum</i>	Woodland Millet	T	1997
<i>Ribes lacustre</i>	Bristly Black Currant	SC	1995
<i>Rosa acicularis</i>	Northern Prickly Rose	E	1919
<i>Solidago macrophylla</i>	Large-Leaved Goldenrod	T	1999
<i>Sorbus decora</i>	Northern Mountain-Ash	E	1997
<i>Spiranthes romanzoffiana</i>	Hooded Ladies'-Tresses	E	1903
<i>Vaccinium vitis-idaea</i> ssp <i>minus</i>	Mountain Cranberry	E	1999
<i>Waldsteinia fragarioides</i>	Barren Strawberry	SC	1922

FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

Inventory

As a result of Adams' dramatic natural setting, remote location, and abundance of protected land, it is home to a variety of unique aquatic and upland wildlife species, including some threatened, rare, and endangered species. (See *Map 4-6: Biological Resources* on page 36.) Upland wildlife species found in the forests and reverting woodlands of the Greylock and Hoosac Ranges include deer, cottontail rabbit, bobcat, fox, squirrel, varying hare, ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*), moose and black bear. In addition, smaller species of reptiles, mammals, and birds add to the region's ecological diversity while simultaneously providing recreational opportunities for naturalists and hunters alike (personal correspondence; *Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986*, 15). The steep terrain, high altitude, and extensive forested slopes of Mount Greylock support species and habitats uncommon to Massachusetts. The many expansive views present an excellent chance to view migratory bird species and birds of prey, particularly hawks and falcons, which utilize the highland updrafts and views to hunt (*Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986*, 15). In addition, varying hare are stocked on the Mount Greylock Reservation.

Map 4-6: Biological Resources



The transitional forest areas provide an important habitat for a variety of edge species, which are at home in the transitional zone between forest and field. This zone supports a distinct community of birds and mammals that commute between one habitat and another to satisfy their needs. The edge is a stopover place when moving between dense forest cover and open field. It provides cover, food, and nesting sites to support a diverse and broad selection of wildlife, including woodpecker, deer, migratory songbirds, hawks, and skunks. On average, these edge communities have three times the diversity of species of other vegetative zones (Benyus 1989, 216).

Open fields are popular feeding grounds for certain wildlife. With greater exposure to sunlight, fields lose their snow cover earlier than upland forests, providing excellent foraging opportunities among the grasses and plants during springtime (Benyus 1989, 202–204). Insects are drawn to flowering vegetation, in turn attracting birds to feed. Pheasant and wild turkey can be found in the lowland agricultural fields and forest edges. Three areas are presently stocked with pheasant: Burlingame Hill (on the east side of town), the Hoosic River floodplain (north side), and northeast of the Cheesbro Brook headwaters (*Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986*, 15). As agricultural uses dwindle and fields grow over, field bird populations will decline as a result of insufficient cover and nesting areas.

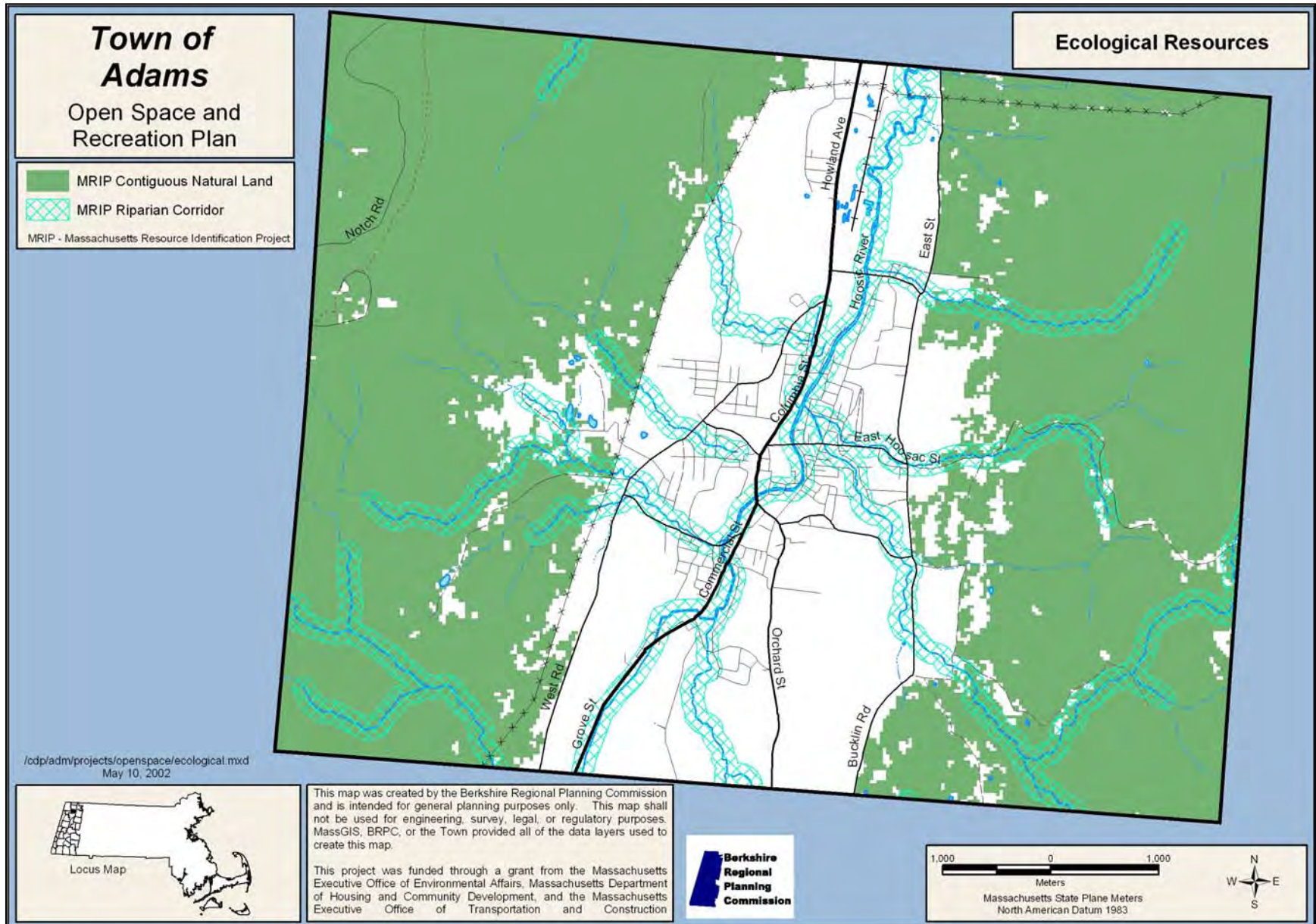
The Adams area is an excellent place for hunting and wildlife observation. Fast-moving, forested streams draining from the steep slopes of the Greylock and Hoosac Ranges into the Hoosic River provide extensive lengths of edge habitat for fur-bearing animals such as mink, otter, and muskrat (*Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986*, 15). Beaver have been creating wetlands in the upland areas of Adams, increasing the number of wetlands found in the area. However, due to the topography, wetlands are typically small and sparse. (See *Map 4-3: Surface Water Resources* on page 27.) Along the Hoosic River and on small lowland ponds, waterfowl—including black duck (*Anas rubripes*, a declining species) and great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*)—can be found.

The ecological health of Adams' Hoosic River and its many tributaries varies. Native species of trout can be found in the upland mountain streams where oxygen, water temperature, and forest cover is suitable for their habitat. These intact riparian habitats are also home to the rare and endangered Appalachian Crayfish. The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife provide trout stocking at the south branch of the Hoosic River, as well as at the Anthony, Tophet, Hoxie and Southwick Brooks (*Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan 1986*, 15).

Vernal Pools

There are three certified vernal Pools in Adams. Two are located in the Greylock Glen area and the third is also on the western side of town in the foothills of Mt. Greylock. All three are located in currently protected open space.

Map 4-7: Ecological Resources



Corridors

Map 4-7: Ecological Resources on page 39 shows contiguous natural lands in Adams. There are extensive areas to the east and west of town that are traversed by riparian corridors. These areas serve the habitat needs of large and roaming animals such as bear, moose and coyote. They also provide buffers for deeper forest species and birds of prey that have a large home range. However, there is no adequate corridor between the eastern hills and the western Mt. Greylock region. This has been the traditional area of development and maintenance of that concentrated development is important to preventing sprawl in Adams.

The Hoosic River is a highly altered and disturbed natural corridor due to long-standing source pollution from local manufacturing, and to flood control channelization throughout downtown. The limitation of the river's use by residents for recreational and drinking purposes indicates an unhealthy link in the local ecosystem. A key to remedying Adams' water cycle is to restore the river to the extent possible. Restoring the river in the flood control chutes with bioengineering, controlling runoff with stormwater best management practices, and reducing agricultural runoff and erosion by planting vegetative buffers along stream networks are a few proactive solutions to improving water and habitat quality.

Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species

The following list of rare and endangered species comes from the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. All of the following species have the State Rank "Special Concern" (SC). This indicates that the species are natives that have suffered a decline which could threaten the species, or have a small number, limited distribution, or specialized habitat. *Map 4-6: Biological Resources* on page 37 indicates the approximate distribution of these species in Adams.

Table 4-5: Rare and Endangered Species of Fish and Wildlife

Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank	Most Recent Observation
<i>Catostomus catostomus</i>	Longnose Sucker (Fish)	SC	1986
<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	Spring Salamander	SC	1995
<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	Sharp-Shinned Hawk	SC	1945
<i>Dendroica striata</i>	Blackpoll Warbler	SC	1997
<i>Oporornis philadelphia</i>	Mourning Warbler	SC	1990
<i>Sorex dispar</i>	Long-Tailed Shrew	SC	1951
<i>Cambarus bartonii</i>	Appalachian Brook Crayfish	SC	1995
<i>Somatochlora cingulata</i>	Lake Emerald (Dragonfly)	SC	1973
<i>Desmocerus palliatus</i>	Elderberry Long-Horned Beetle	SC	1997

SCENIC RESOURCES AND UNIQUE ENVIRONMENTS

Scenic Landscapes

The unique visual character of Adams is created by a combination of its natural and built environments, each of which has influenced the other since the town's settlement. The town consists of three areas of distinguishable, major land character features: the valley floor, surrounding transitional hills, and steep, mountainous slopes. Colonists took advantage of the rich soils of the expansive, undulating hills along the margins of the valley, clearing out a good deal of forest in the process. Meanwhile, a town center grew up in the narrow valley, along the Hoosic River. While agricultural activities in Adams have considerably subsided since then, allowing the forest to reclaim marginal lands once used for farming, traditional land use patterns persist. Evidence of the agricultural uses which once dominated the town are still visible in the open lands surrounding the village, articulated by hedgerows, stone field walls, and old farmsteads. The development patterns of the small village narrate the town's rich history as well, from the industrial era's mills and worker row houses to downtown's urban renewal. (See *Map 4-5: 1999 Land Use* on page 34.)

Today, the town's scenic landscapes are extensive, articulated by the dense development of the village core along the Hoosic River, the surrounding undulating hills of agricultural fields and open pastures, and the dramatically steep, forested slopes, high peaks and ridge lines of the mountain ranges that frame it (See *Special Landscapes Map*). The hills which transition the valley and the forest slopes are scenic for their openness, which is made doubly scenic by vegetative features. The juxtaposition of open and forested land provides visual interest with its contrasting textures and colors. An area where the forest extends into the open space in a corridor-like fashion not only provides more edge habitat for wildlife, but also adds variety and scenic beauty to the landscape. Likewise, woodland patches, tree groves, hedgerows, and even the solitary tree specimen contribute to the visual interest and variety of the landscape, making it more pleasant to observe.

The village itself is scenic—a quaint, New England center, predominantly consisting of historic buildings and civic structures, including several lovely churches and Victorian neighborhoods. In addition, the village is scattered with many parks and green spaces, including cemeteries and mature street trees. These attributes promote a scale and atmosphere that is comfortable, pedestrian-friendly, and pleasant to interact with. There is hardly a place throughout the village where majestic views of the surrounding hills are entirely obstructed. Likewise, views from higher elevations of town toward the center are equally scenic, clearly distinguishing a panorama of history and beauty in the transition from dense development to open fields to forested slopes and peaks.

A particular special area of town is that known as Greylock Glen. This 1,061-acre parcel at the foot of Mt. Greylock is state owned as a part of the Greylock Reservation. Much of the area was formerly farmed but has returned to fields, forests and wetlands. Greylock Glen is extremely popular among Adams's residents as well as visitors for hiking, biking, skiing, hunting, fishing and passive recreation. The Glen has long been the focus of a

state-led effort to bring economic development to Adams. Proposals for development always meet with extreme controversy though some modest development of an environmental education center and improved trail system are generally supported.

Major Characteristic or Unusual Geologic Features

In Adams, the Hoosic River is surrounded on both sides by relatively steep mountain ranges, lending a very distinctive and scenic character to the valley. These high points and ridges are highly scenic in-and-of themselves, and also provide excellent vantages from which to view each other and the valley. Views to and from these ridges are highly valued by town residents. The scenic contribution of these landform features dramatically impact the scenic integrity of the town because of their high visibility. Great care should be taken to ensure that any development of Adams' scenic slopes be minimal and discreet.

Following is a list of specific geologic features in Adams that add to the character and beauty of the town.

Table 4-6: Geologic Features of Adams

Geologic Feature	Description
Mount Greylock Summit	The most prominent single geologic feature in the town is Mount Greylock, located in Adams' northwest quadrant. Greylock is Massachusetts' highest peak, reaching 3,491 feet above mean sea level. Rising approximately 2,700 feet above the valley floor, Mount Greylock is visible throughout the town, and also provides a commanding view of the valley and the Hoosac Range.
Specialty Minerals Quarry Outcrop	The quarrying activity of this company has exposed an extensive portion of hillside in the north-central part of town, revealing a horizontally terraced outcrop of limestone. Despite that many residents consider ongoing quarry activities and the increasing depth of this feature to be a nuisance, the upper part of the quarry is an impressive sight from areas of town where only the top portion of this feature is visible.
Pecks Falls	Pecks Falls are an impressive series of waterfalls, cascading over massive boulders in Pecks Brook, located on the western side of the town in the Greylock Glen area. There are informal trails through the sheltering woodland that surround the falls, providing access to the brook and falls.
Bellevue Falls	Bellevue Falls are located in the Bellevue Cemetery, in the south-central part of town.

Cultural and Historic Areas

Adams has a number of culturally and historically significant areas that are important in referencing the town's heritage. For the purposes of this plan, these resources must be assessed with regard to their relative importance; they are evaluated in terms of their level of significance, and then ranked as either locally or nationally significant. Those designated as nationally significant are those, which are currently listed on the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places. Resources designated as locally significant are not listed on the National Register, but are recognized locally as important cultural and historical features. Resources at both levels of significance are important to the history of Adams, and those listed on the National Register are likely to be of importance beyond the local level as well. Historic and cultural resources may include individual properties, such as houses or buildings, or they may embody an entire district. While National Register status may increase local awareness of the significance of these properties to some degree, those that remain in private ownership remain vulnerable to alterations, which may degrade their level of historic integrity.

Historic Districts

Summer Street National Register Historic District: This residential area contains a number of unique and architecturally distinctive private homes dating from the 1890s; the majority of these are in excellent condition.

Mount Greylock Summit National Register Historic District: The summit and 1,200 acres of the State Reservation make up this district. The designation is based on historic events at the site and the architecture of Bascom Lodge. Mt. Greylock was the first property in the state park system.

The following are ***proposed*** historic districts for the Town of Adams:

Park Street Local Historic District: Six of the buildings in this district are listed on the National Register. The district also contains some locally important properties, including the American Legion building (recently renovated as the new Town Hall) and the First Congregational Church. Park Street is the "main street" of Adams, and reflects many of the town's changes and developments since the early 1800s.

McKinley Square Local Historic District: This small green space at the north end of Park Street features a monument erected in honor of President McKinley. This small rotary intersection is beautifully surrounded by the town's Memorial Library, the St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Church, and the Notre Dame des Sept Douleurs Roman Catholic Church.

Summer Street Local Historic District: Just north of the National Register district noted above, Summer Street turns into a commercial district that thrived when Adams' mills were at their peak. Today the area is historically important, though in some disrepair.

Renfrew Local Historic District: This district, located on Columbia Street, contains several historic row houses that are a reflection of Adams industrial heritage.

National Register of Historic Places: Individual Property Listings

There are numerous houses and buildings throughout Adams that are historically significant for their association with original settlers, many dating back to the late 1700s and the Revolutionary War era. All of the sites are located along existing roads and are therefore accessible to the public. Additional information about them is available from the Adams Historical Commission.

- Susan B. Anthony Birthplace, Bowens Corners
- The Armory Block, Park Street
- P. J. Barrett Block, Park Street
- Berkshire Mill #1, Corner of Columbia and Hoosac Streets
- Hoosac Street School, Hoosac Street
- Jones Block, Park Street
- Mausert Block, Park Street
- Park Street Firehouse, Park Street
- Phillips Woolen Mills, Quality Street
- Pittsfield and North Adams Passenger Station and Baggage House, Pleasant Street
- Quaker Meeting House, Friend Street
- Renfrew Mill #2, the Arnold Printworks, Columbia Street
- Simmons Block, Park Street

Locally Significant Historic Properties

- Joshua Lapham House Marker, Crandall Street
- Hale-Parker House, 100 Orchard Street
- Eleazer Browne House, 135 Orchard Street
- Edmund Jenks House, Orchard Street
- Jeremiah Bucklin House, Bucklin Road
- Burlingame House, Walling Road
- Cpt. Philip Mason House, East Road
- Staples Houses, East Lime and Lime Street
- Daniel MacFarlane House, 238 Columbia Street
- Town Meeting House, Old Columbia Street
- Abraham Howland Mansion, 378 Old Columbia Street
- Benjamin Lapham House, 91 Friend Street
- The Upton Houses, 140 Friend Street and the corner of Friend and Cross Street
- Zacheus Hathaway House, 62 Notch Road
- The Isaac Killey House, 11 West Road
- Joseph Shove House, 12 West Road
- The Dean Grist Mill and Cotton Batting Factory, West Road

- Israel Cole Homestead and Underground Railroad Graves, West Road
- Bob's Hill, west of Park Street and just north of the Hoosac River

Churches

Religious buildings in Adams are included as culturally significant because they typically represent the foci of social activities for various ethnic groups in Adams. In addition, the splendid and grand architectural nature of these buildings contributes to the scenic beauty of Adams' downtown.

- First Baptist Church, 13 Commercial Street
- The Congregational Church, 42 Park Street
- St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Commercial and River Streets
- Notre Dame des Sept Douleur Roman Catholic Church, Columbia and Maple Streets
- St. Stanislaus Kostka Roman Catholic Church, Hoosac and Summer Streets
- St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Church, 2 Columbia Street

Cemeteries

Cemeteries and burial grounds provide a direct link to Adams' past, and are valuable as historic artifacts. In addition, many are visually quite impressive, contributing to Adams' scenic quality.

- St. Stanislaus Kostka Cemetery and Grotto
- Bellevue Cemetery
- Maple Street Cemetery
- Cole Family Cemetery
- East Road Cemetery
- Daniel's Court Cemetery
- Orchard Street Burial Ground
- East Mountain Road Cemetery

Urban Parks

The urban parks are central to Adams' desire to maintain a dense livable town center. These areas are open and available to residents and visitors alike. Neighborhood parks are desirable to local residents as places to congregate and enjoy passive recreation.

Ecologically Significant Areas

The town of Adams is located in an area that is rich with ecologically significant landscapes. This is evident by the concentration of important habitats identified and mapped by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Ecologically significant areas include those, which support habitats of threatened, rare, or endangered terrestrial and wetland species along

the Hoosic River and Pecks, Tophet, Notch, and Hoxie Brooks, and in the Mount Greylock Reservation (See *Map 4-6: Biological Resources* on page 37 and *Map 4-7: Ecological Resources* on page 39). Birds of prey particularly benefit from Greylock mountain updrafts in hunting for prey. In addition, the steep slopes of Mt. Greylock support some characteristically sub alpine species, which exhibit such features as stunted vegetative growth. Areas of rare flora and fauna habitats are also biologically important and should benefit from some level of protection. The Department of Environmental Protection strictly regulates wetland habitats, but upland habitats are not protected by current regulation. Prior to any development in these specific areas, this agency must be consulted (Quabbin to Wachusett 1991, 57).

ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

The Town of Adams is fortunate to be located in a region of outstanding beauty and relatively modest development. The growing environmental awareness of its citizens has allowed Adams to further development while maintaining and even improving the quality of its environs. Environmental problems are important to document because future development or conservation will depend on the conditions of the land parcel in question. For example, a recreational facility would be poorly placed if built next to a polluted industrial area. The quality of the Hoosic River has improved in a large part because of the loss of industrial processes and industries along the river (*Hoosic River Action Plan 1987, 7*).

Hazardous Waste Sites

There are 18 registered Underground Storage Tanks in Adams. Most of these are for existing commercial uses and should be regulated. Unknown USTs are more likely to pose a threat, but would have to be discovered through a municipal inspection program. No such program exists at this time.

Landfills

The former landfill is located just to the northeast of the town center and is presently capped and lined. A 1980 Berkshire County Regional Planning Commission report (Berkshire Non-Designated “208” Area Water Quality Management Planning) suspects the Adams landfill to be a source of pollution to Cheesbro Brook and the Hoosic River. On a visit to the landfill on January 10, 1986, BRPC staff noted reddish-brown leachate flowing out of the base of the landfill (*Hoosic River Action Plan 1987, 9*). In addition to the landfill, there is a “town dump” that is privately owned and resides on the west side of town. The current status of this property is unknown..

Specialty Minerals, Inc. maintains two sludge/waste rock landfills on their property north of the town center.

Erosion

Much of the region is forested with deciduous and some evergreen vegetation, and because of the low-density development on the slopes, erosion is not a major concern. With the central part of the Hoosic River channeled to prevent flooding, the banks of the river are in no danger of slipping. The northern section of the river is lightly vegetated and some soil loss is expected. The floodplain area of the Hoosic River, north of the town center does contain highly erodible soils, but no significant problems are reported at this time (See *Map 4-2: Soils* on page 26).

Chronic Flooding

Because of the flatness of the north end of town, it is a designated flood plain area and development is limited. The flood protection project in Adams consists principally of levees, floodwalls, chutes, appurtenant structures, pumping plants and channel improvement. These improvements provide protection for the town of Adams against a flood discharge that is about 50 percent greater than the maximum flood of record, 5,500 cubic feet per second, which occurred in September 1938 (Adams Conservation Commission 1980, 71).

Sedimentation

Sedimentation is of minimal concern because of the scarcity of surface water bodies. Bassett Reservoir is no longer used as a public water source, and the other ponds are presently not utilized for organized recreation. The outflow of the Hoosic River through town is a fast-draining system that does not allow much sediment to settle out.

Development Impact

Residential development in Adams is slow as the economy is still struggling. The town is working with the state and other partners on economic development, but within principles of sustainability. The town is committed to encourage re-development of the dense downtown in order to maximize the use of municipal utilities and to preserve open space. This effort must be considerable given the extent of buildable land in the community (See *Map 3-4: Buildable Land* on page 19).

Ground and Surface Water Pollution (Point and Nonpoint)

Point source pollution in Adams has been a problem since the beginning of the town's history. As a mill town, Adams was dependent upon the river for its livelihood. Unfortunately, businesses located along the river did not have today's level of respect for the resource and freely dumped wastes into it. Most companies and mills have since closed, and environmental regulations have been implemented, allowing the river to regenerate itself somewhat.

There are two National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits in Adams. These belong to the Adams Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Specialty Minerals, Inc. These are the only remaining industrial discharges to the Hoosic River.

Both permits were brought up for renewal in 2000. The WWTP permit was issued. The Specialty Minerals, Inc. permit is tied to the Hoosic River Ecosystem Restoration Project, which is seeking to reclaim the Hoosic River in the flood control chutes with bioengineering. The Ecosystem Project Partnership developed for this project consists of ten local state and federal agencies.

Nonpoint source pollution refers to unwanted material that is seeping or washing into the river from removed sources, which are typically undetectable. The water quality of the South Branch of the Hoosic River has been rated as class B: officially safe for bathing and recreational purposes, acceptable for public water supply with treatment, excellent for fish and wildlife habitat, excellent in aesthetic values, and suitable for agricultural and industrial purposes (*Hoosic River Action Plan 1987, 7*). Agricultural land use in the Hoosic watershed can also be a source of nonpoint source pollution, particularly from erosion, manure, fertilizer, and pesticides. Adams has 1,144 acres of agricultural land that potentially impact the Hoosic River and Tophet Brook (*Hoosic River Action Plan 1987, 9*).

There are six NPDES Stormwater permits in Adams. These are for: W.R. Grace, Catamount Pellet Fuel Corporation, Specialty Minerals, Inc., Berkshire Mill Residences, Crowne Vantage Paper, and Lane Construction. All of these properties are located along the Hoosic River. Under these US EPA permits, these industrial activities must have stormwater management plans in place and must seek to reduce the impact of their stormwater on the river.

SECTION 5: INVENTORY OF LANDS OF CONSERVATION & RECREATION INTEREST

DESCRIPTION AND INVENTORY OF PROTECTED AND UNPROTECTED PARCELS

Introduction

The Town of Adams has a range of open space resources and recreational areas that add to the quality of life enjoyed by its residents. The parks and playgrounds of the Town's densely developed village core are complimented nicely by the hiking trails and scenic vistas over the forests and open spaces of the outlying sections of the Town. These areas are under both public and private ownership, and they hold various levels of protection and various amounts of exposure to the possibility of future development, which may limit the current level of public enjoyment offered.

This section contains an inventory of the parks, playgrounds, forests, open spaces, and other areas in town seen of particular interest to the residents of Adams in terms of recreation or conservation. This section will list the important parcels and give a description of their ownership and management, the level of accessibility to the public, and the level of protection from development they hold. The lands are sorted into nine categories based on ownership, recreational possibilities, and level of protection. Tables 5-1 through 5-9 on the following pages show details for parcels in each category. Maps 5-1 and 5-2 (on pages show Open Space and Recreational Resources, respectively.

The categories are defined as follows:

Public Conservation and Recreation Resources: This category is comprised of State Parklands and Town Conservation Lands. These areas are large-parcel forests open to public access and recreation.

Municipal Parks: These properties are parks and playgrounds owned and managed by the Town of Adams, many of which lie within the village core. They are not likely to be developed.

Cemeteries: Cemeteries in Adams have both public and private ownership and management. They offer public access for passive recreation and reflection. As with municipal parks, they have no formal protection but are not likely to be developed.

Chapter 61A Lands - Protected Agriculture: Chapter 61A voluntary enrollment programs for preferential tax assessment based on current use of the land. Chapter 61A requires a 5 acre minimum of agricultural land which must produce a minimum amount of agricultural products. Chapter 61A prohibits development unrelated to agricultural purposes. The landowner must re-apply for the program each year.

Chapter 61 Lands – Forestry: Similar to Chapter 61A except that the tax abatement is for forest lands managed for timber production. In order to qualify for Chapter 61, landowners must have 10 acres that are suitable for timber production. The program offers 95% tax savings, prohibits development unrelated to timber production, and requires a 10-year management plan.

Conservation Restriction Lands - Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Land: A conservation restriction is legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified conservation organization or government agency that permanently limits a property's use in order to protect its conservation values. The APR Program is a voluntary, state run program which is intended to offer a non-development alternative to farmers and other owners or "prime" and "state important" agricultural land who are faced with a decision regarding future use and disposition of their farms. Towards this end, the program offers to pay farmers the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability.

Private Recreation Lands and Informal Recreation Areas: This category contains privately-owned recreational areas that may or may not charge a fee for use of the facilities. It also includes areas that are commonly used by residents but are on private land and are not protected for future use, and areas on public lands that are informally used as swimming holes.

Unprotected Lands Currently Being Farmed: These lands are farms not participating in Chapter 61A and are operating without conservation restrictions or tax abatements.

Large Parcel Industrial Land: This category is for large tracts of land currently under industrial use that is, for the most part, open space.

Table 5-1. Public Conservation and Recreation Resources

A large percentage of open space in the Town of Adams is publicly owned. This land is largely on the western side of Town in a single contiguous site connecting with the Greylock Reservation. The City of North Adams owns the water rights to the Bellows Pipe watershed, which is an overlay district entirely within the Greylock Reservation. The Ashuwillticook Rail Trail Land is a strip of land in the center of town running North/South along Route 8. The Savoy Mt. State Forest is in northeastern Adams, but the majority of open space in eastern Adams is neither publicly owned nor protected.

Site Name	Map / Parcel Number	Owner	Manager	Acreage	Use	Activities	Public Access	Level of Protection
Ashuwillticook Rail Trail	119/312	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEM	21	Recreation	Walking, Biking, Rollerblading	Y	Permanent
Bassett Brook Watershed	209/014	Adams Fire District	Town of Adams	341	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Mountain Biking	Y	Permanent
Bellows Pipe Watershed	214/001	Greylock Park Association	City of North Adams	226	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Mountain Biking	Y	Permanent
Savoy Mt. State Forest	241/001	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEM	477	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Biking, Camping, Picnicking, Swimming, Skiing, Boating, Hunting, fishing, Horseback riding	Y	Permanent
Greylock Reservation	203/001	Greylock Park Association	DEM	2,450	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Camping, Picnicking, Swimming, Skiing, Hunting	Y	Permanent
Greylock Reservation	210/002	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEM	245	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Mountain Biking	Y	Permanent
Greylock Reservation	210/007	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEM	184	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Mountain Biking	Y	Permanent
Greylock Reservation	218/005	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEM	352	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Mountain Biking	Y	Permanent
Greylock Reservation	217/006	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEM	32.68	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Mountain Biking	Y	Permanent
Greylock Reservation	218/038.2	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEM	61.62	Recreation / Conservation	Hiking, Mountain Biking	Y	Permanent

Table 5-2. Municipal Parks

Parks and playgrounds owned or managed by the Town of Adams are largely concentrated around high-density residential areas in the village center. They have no formal protection from development but are not likely to be developed. There are currently 12 municipal parks averaging 3 acres that offer a variety of passive and active recreational amenities.

Site Name	Map/ Parcel #	Manager	Acres	Activities	Amenities	Zoning	Comments
Bowe Field	102/ 037	Town of Adams/ Adams Agricultural Fair	13	Fairgrounds, children’s playground	Field house, cattle barn, toilets, flood lights, on-site parking, small playground.	R-4	The toilet facilities are not fully finished, a need for concession space and office space. The Adams agricultural fair has a 25-year lease on the property, and uses it for the annual agricultural fair, and is rented to other organizations.
Memorial Park	112/ 001 112/ 004	Town of Adams	1.41	Passive recreation	Benches, wastebaskets, and a drinking fountain. Was upgraded in 1992 with the planting of several maple trees and several period lighting poles. Central Location makes for a popular passive recreation.	R-1	This park has benches, wastebaskets, and a drinking fountain. Was upgraded in 1992 with the planting of several maple trees and several period lighting poles. Central Location makes for a popular passive recreation.
Quality Playground	121/ 024	Town of Adams	0.5	Playground, Fishing	Playground w/ a chute and 2 swing sets, and access to fishing on Hoosic River	R-4	Located along the Hoosic River
Reid Field	109/ 265	Town of Adams	1.4	Playground, softball	Children’s playground, with swings and chutes, softball field with electric scoreboard, toilets & off street parking.	R-4	
Renfrew Athletic Field	107/ 155	Town of Adams	5.2	Playground, athletic fields	Children’s playground, baseball field with enclosed batting cages, football field with regulation lighting. Field house with hot-food facilities, broadcast booth with handicapped toilet facilities. On street parking only.	R-4	
Russell Field	119/ 088	Town of Adams	3.7	Tennis, softball, playground, lighting	Two asphalt tennis courts, one softball diamond, and a children’s Playground	R-3	
Siara Street Field	112/ 311	Town of Adams	0.57	Passive recreation	No facilities, lighting or equipment.	R-4	No facilities, lighting or equipment.
Town Common	115/ 073	Town of Adams	0.57	Passive recreation	Landscaped gazebo, hardwood benches, waste receptacles, old-style light posts, and brick-paved walkway.	B-2	Contains a gazebo, benches, period lighting, trash bins
Valley Street Field	112/ 002	Town of Adams	4	Little league, soccer,	Little league field with dugouts and lighting, some on-street parking spaces	R-3	Upgraded with computerized irrigation system in 1992
Wacky World	115/ 081	Town of Adams	1.8	Elaborate playground.	Extensive child-play area	R-4	
Hoosic River Floodplain	107/ 084	Town of Adams	4	Fishing, walking	None	R-4 & IP	
East St. Youth Center	116/268	Town of Adams	4.3	Playground, Picnic, sitting area	Installing Pavilion, child playground, 6 picnic tables, and benches.	R-4	Renovations to be completed 9/02

Table 5-3. Cemeteries

Cemeteries in Adams have both public and private ownership and management. There are three large cemeteries and four very small cemeteries in town. The small cemeteries have walking paths that offer visitors aesthetic and historical benefits. The larger cemeteries offer more room for passive recreation, while some even offer active recreation. For example, the largest cemetery, the 47-acre Bellevue Cemetery, contains Bellevue falls, a popular water recreational area in the summer months.

Site Name	Map/ Parcel #	Owner/ Manager	Acres	Amenities	Comments
Maple Street Cemetery	113/083	Town of Adams	16	None	
Daniel's Court Cemetery	119/207	Town of Adams	0.15	None	
Orchard Street Burial Ground	122/071	Town of Adams	0.06	None	
Bellevue Cemetery	123/036	Town of Adams	47	Water Area	Contains Bellevue Falls, a popular place for swimming and fishing.
East Road Cemetery	223/029	Town of Adams	0.13	None	
St. Stanislaus Kostika Parish Cemetery & Grotto	223/001	RC Bishop of Springfield	37.1	None	
Cole Family Cemetery	-	Private	0.01	None	

Table 5-4. Chapter 61A Lands - Protected Agriculture

Chapter 61A voluntary enrollment programs are for preferential tax assessment based on maintaining agricultural use of the land. Currently, in fiscal year 2002, several farms in Adams are taking part in this program and a total of over 675 acres of agricultural land hold temporary protection from development.

Location	Map/Parcel Number	Owner/Manager	Status	Acres	Public Access	Level of Protection	Comments
East Mountain Road	234/013	Alibozek, David E.	Private	8.8	N	Temporary	.
East Mountain Road	236/001	Alibozek, David E.	Private	45	N	Temporary	.
East Mountain Road	234/012	Alibozek, David E.	Private	134	N	Temporary	Location # 109

Table 5-4. Chapter 61A Lands - Protected Agriculture (continued)

Location	Map/Parcel Number	Owner/Manager	Status	Acres	Public Access	Level of Protection	Comments
Burlingame Hill	222/006	Alibozek, Edward	Private	25	N	Temporary	.
Burlingame Hill	222/007	Alibozek, Edward	Private	10.7	N	Temporary	Location # 119
Burlingame Hill	223/048	Brandon, Aurthur G	Private	54	N	Temporary	.
East Road	226/009	Naughton, Thomas J.	Private	46	N	Temporary	Location # 217
East Hoosac Street	232/001	Stohlmann, Aurthur J	Private	310	N	Temporary	Location # 128
Country Road	233/001.1	Stohlmann, Martha Jean	Private	14.8	N	Temporary	Location # 30
East Mountain Road	234/007.1	Alibozek, David	Private	1.4	N	Temporary	.
East Mountain Road	234/007.3	Alibozek, David	Private	5.9	N	Temporary	.
East Road	106/053.1	Stohlmann, Martha Jean	Private	20	N	Temporary	.

Table 5-5. Chapter 61 Lands – Forestry

Adams has two landowners receiving tax abatements for maintaining forestlands that are managed for timber production. A total of 375 acres are currently under temporary protection from development under this program.

Location	Map/Parcel Number	Owner/Manager	Status	Acreage	Public Access	Level of Protection
E. Hoosac Street	240/001	Balardini, Thomas	Private	90	N	Temporary
Spring Road	230/001.2	Northern Berkshire Holdings, Ltd.	Private	285	N	Temporary

Table 5-6. Conservation Restriction Lands – Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Land

According to the 2002 Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management Report, landowners in Adams have permanently protected a total of approximately 570 acres of farmland through the APR Program.

Location	Map/Parcel Number	Owner / Manager	Status	Acres	Public Access	Level of Protection	Comments
East Road	227/006	Burnett, Douglas C	Private	69	N	Permanent	Location # 312
East Road	227/003	Burnett, Douglas C	Private	107	N	Permanent	.
East Road	227/005	Burnett, Jane M.	Private	82	N	Permanent	.
Charles Street	226/001	Burnett, Jane M.	Private	9.7	N	Permanent	.
East Road	227/001	Burnett, Jane M.	Private	191	N	Permanent	.
Lime Street	104/125	Burnett, Jane M.	Private	12.3	N	Permanent	.
Gould Road	211/001	Gould, Margery L.	Private	228.15	N	Permanent	Location # 215
Walling Road	224/014	Kieltyka, Wanda A.	Private	21	N	Permanent	.
Walling Road	224/013	Kieltyka, Wanda A.	Private	75	N	Permanent	Location # 20
Orchard St.	.	Aryhill Farm	Private	8.97	N	Permanent	.

Table 5-7. Private Recreation Lands and Informal Recreation Areas

Adams contains several recreational areas that offer both structured and unstructured recreational opportunities. The largest private recreational area is the Forest Park Country Club, located just west of Route 8 in central Adams. There are also several informal swimming holes used by residents on both State-owned and private property that could not be listed in this inventory. These areas lie along ponds and rivers in Western and Eastern sections of Adams. Many of the privately owned areas are not protected and do not guarantee any public access.

Site Name	Location	Map/ Parcel #	Owner/ Manager	Acres	Use	Activities	Public Access	Status	Comments
Forest Park Country Club	Forest Park Avenue	115/117	Adams Fairway Realty Co.	4.1	Recreation	Golf	Y-Fee	Private	Location #41
Forest Park Country Club	Forest Park Avenue	115/118	Adams Fairway Realty Co.	11.6	Recreation	Golf	Y-Fee	Private	Location #41
Forest Park Country Club	Forest Park Avenue	115/115.1	Adams Fairway Realty Co.	33	Recreation	Golf	Y-Fee	Private	Location #41
Bellevue Falls	Bellevue Cemetery	123/036	Town of Adams	1	Active / Passive Recreation	Swimming, fishing	Y	Public	Easy daytime access, no formal facilities
Peck's Falls	In Greylock Glen area of Western Adams	-	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	2	Active / Passive Recreation	Swimming, fishing	Y	Public	No formal facilities
Anthony's Pool	Near Greylock Glen	-	-	13	Formerly Used for Recreation	Swimming, dance pavilion, picnic	N	Private	Pond with picnic facilities, dance pavilion, refreshment stand, toilets, and bathhouse. Closed since 1978; was once a popular attraction for town locals.
Mill St. Field	Off of East Hoosac St.	112/28	-	2.6	Soccer Field/Polish Picnic Grounds	Field Sports/picnicking	Y	Private	

Table 5-8. Unprotected Lands Currently Being Farmed

A number of farms in Adams are operating without conservation restrictions or tax abatements. These lands have no formal protection from future development. In total, over 938 acres of farmland in Adams are unprotected. There are currently 2 farms on the waiting list for participation in the APR program with the state.

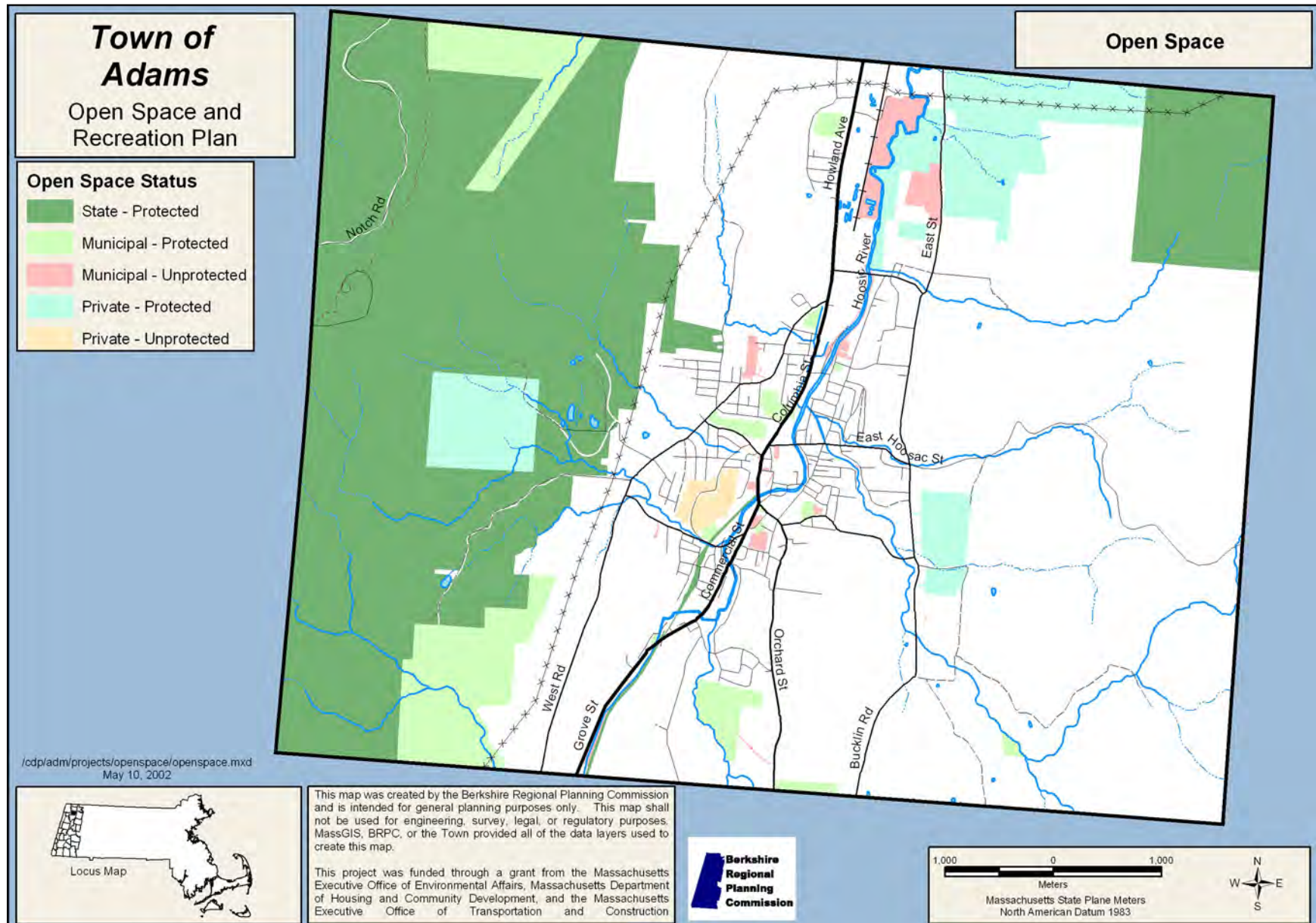
Location	Map/Parcel Number	Owner/Manager	Status	Acres	Public Access	Level of Protection
Bucklin Road	222/003	Ayrhill Farms, Inc.	Private	178	N	None
Orchard Street	223/003.01	Ayrhill Farms, Inc.	Private	36	N	None
Orchard Street	223/003	Hoellerich, George	Private	34	N	None
Gould Road	218/002	Jaesche, Edmund E.	Private	21.89	N	None
East Road	110/001.1	Stohlmann, Aurthur J	Private	43	N	None
Howland Avenue	104/010	Ziemba, Stanley J., Jr.	Private	13	N	None
Walling Road	223/040	Ziemba, Stanley J., Jr.	Private	20	N	None
Walling Road	223/041	Ziemba, Stanley J., Jr.	Private	487	N	None
East Road	227/007	Ziemba, Stanley J., Jr.	Private	70	N	None
Gould Road	218/6	Jaesche, Edmund E.	Private	36	N	None

Table 5-9. Large Parcel Industrial Land

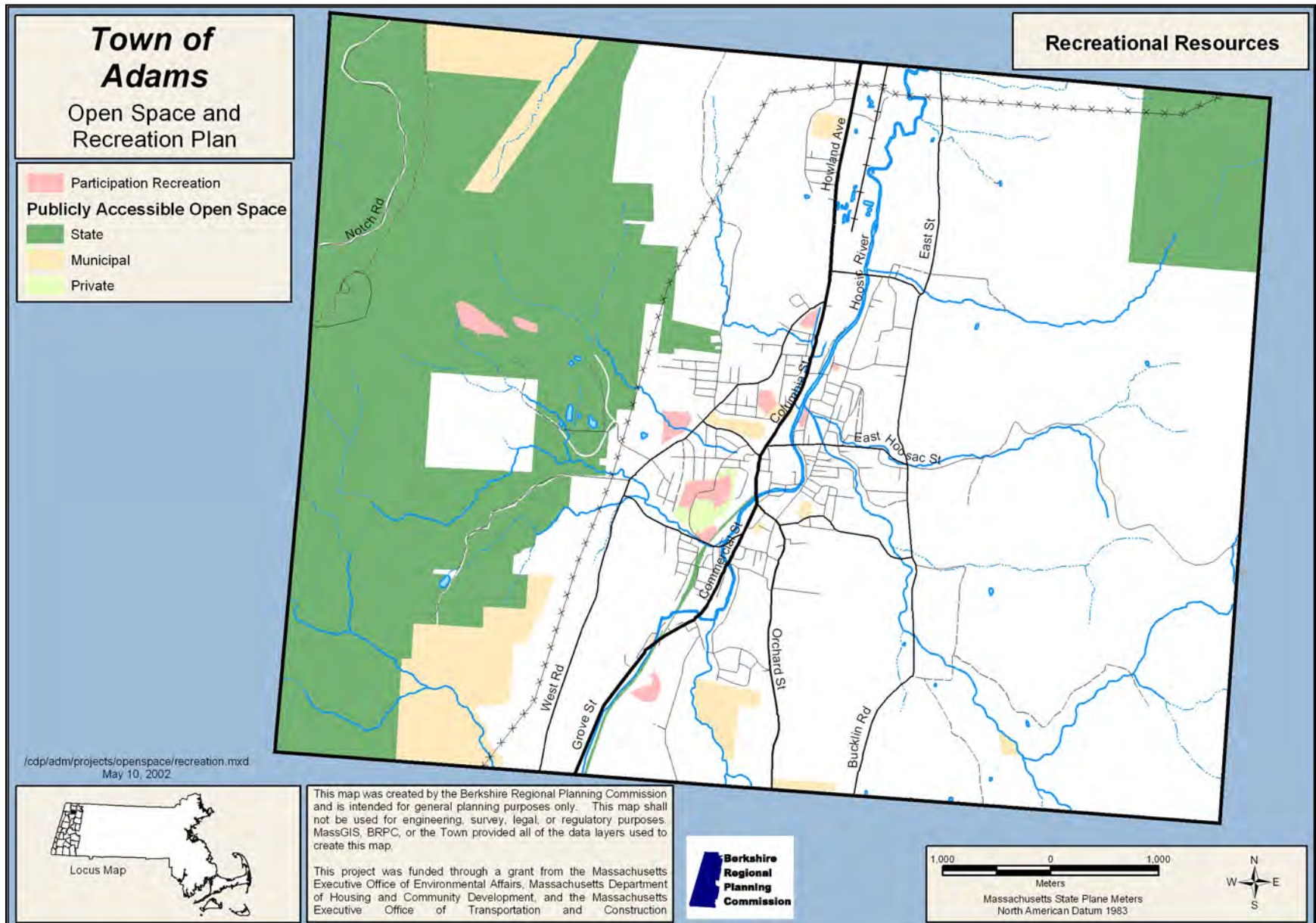
A total of over 885 acres of land are currently under private industrial use in Adams.

Location	Map/Parcel Number	Owner/Manager	Status	Acreage	Public Access	Level of Protection	Zoning
Notch Road	216/004	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	70	N	None	I
Notch Road	217/006.01	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	19	N	None	I
Notch Road	217/007	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	45	N	None	I
Notch Road	217/005	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	74.38	N	None	I
Notch Road	216/003	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	139	N	None	I
Howland Avenue	103/008	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	25.56	N	None	I
Notch Road	216/001	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	69	N	None	I
Columbia Street	104/008	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	428	N	None	I
Columbia Street	107/045	Specialty Minerals, Inc.	Private	16	N	None	I

Map 5-1: Open Space



Map 5-2: Recreational Resources



SECTION 6: COMMUNITY VISION

DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

In the spring of 2002, with the assistance of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the Town of Adams Community Development Department designed an Open Space and Recreation Survey to measure the values and opinions of Town residents on the topic of open space and recreation. The preliminary survey was reviewed by the Board of Selectmen, who made recommendations on revisions to remove bias and increase the clarity of certain questions. In order to be as all-inclusive as possible, the survey was sent to a random selection of 600 households located throughout the Town. A press release notified residents of the mailed survey, and extra surveys were made available at the town hall for any interested party who did not receive the mailing. Exactly 200 completed surveys were returned. Results of the survey were compiled into a final report (see Appendix A), which was reviewed by the Community Development Department and the Parks Commission. At a meeting with the Parks Commission to review the survey results, Commissioners offered additional input regarding specific recreational concerns of town residents that were not explicitly covered by the survey.

STATEMENT OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS

Surrounded by beautiful mountains and wooded landscape, the Town of Adams possesses a rich, rural heritage with a wealth of open spaces, natural resources, and recreational opportunities. As demonstrated by the 2002 Open Space and Recreation Survey, Town residents care deeply for preserving the historic character and natural beauty of the Town. Residents of Adams hold the preservation of significant environmentally sensitive lands and water resources as the top priority relating to open space conservation. As Adams moves into the future, residents wish to maintain an adequate supply of open space and recreational lands to keep pace with the Town's growth and development. The overwhelming majority of Town residents actively participates in some type of recreational activity, and wish to develop and maintain recreational facilities that adequately meet their diverse and changing recreational needs.

SECTION 7: ANALYSIS OF NEEDS

SUMMARY OF RESOURCE PROTECTION NEEDS

The Town of Adams is experiencing a relatively slow growth rate in residential, commercial and industrial development, which creates a moderately stable situation regarding natural resource usage and protection. This is an ideal time to plan for the future protection of natural resources and open space. In fact 80% of the respondents to the Open Space survey indicated that the town's rural nature and open spaces are the greatest advantages to living in Adams and they support efforts to protect them.

This analysis of needs is based upon the results of the community survey as well as needs identified in other planning studies, previous open space plans, and interpretation of the Open Space Plan maps and EOEa Buildout analysis.

Need to Protect Forests, Agriculture and Other Scenic Resources

According to the survey, Adams residents support the protection of farms, forests, and other scenic resources. Threats to these resources are especially apparent in agriculture. The viability of family-run farms like those in Adams is always in question. State programs, like the Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, have long waiting lists, and should ideally be supplemented with some local effort toward protection. In addition, the town's agricultural resources are located in areas of buildable land, with few constraints to development. The town's largest farms are located on the Amenia-Pittsfield-Farmington soil association, which is well suited to agriculture. Other soils in town are not well suited to agriculture, therefore protection of existing farms is important, because they will likely not be replaced. Typically farmlands are cleared and attractive to developers.

Forest resources associated with state lands are protected, however, the scenic area to the south and east of town is unprotected and has few constraints to development. (See *Map 3-4: Buildable Lands* on page 19 and *Map 4-1: Special Landscapes* on page 22.) This area is also high in ecological resources.

Following water quality concerns, protection of the beauty of the landscape was important to residents. The town needs to incorporate natural resource protection and community character concerns into growth planning.

Need to Protect Water Resources

Top priorities for resource protection are protection of drinking water supplies and improvement in the water quality of rivers and streams. Given that the Town of Adams' water supply wells are located in the neighboring town of Cheshire, it is important for

Adams to proactively pursue the protection of the wells there and to maintain good municipal relations. There are high and medium yield aquifers in Adams that lie along the Hoosic River in the northern half of town. Efforts to protect the floodplain from development will lead toward protection of these potential future water sources, as well as protect the Hoosic River and the function of the floodplain for the greater Hoosic Watershed.

Protection of surface water resources in the urbanized area of downtown Adams merits special attention. Adams' historical development pattern along the banks of the Hoosic River provides challenges to protecting water quality. In order to adequately protect the rivers and tributary streams from urban runoff, specific actions that focus on stormwater treatment and prevention will be necessary. In addition, the Hoosic River is on the state 303d List of Impaired Waters for pathogens. Since there are no wastewater treatment plants along the river, above the Adams WWTP, nonpoint source pollution is the prime culprit for the pathogen contamination. Stormwater treatment is part of the recommended strategy for addressing the river's impairment, according to the *Hoosic River Watershed Assessment Report* by BRPC.

The Hoosic River runs along Rt. 8 for most of its journey through Adams and crosses through the densest development downtown. The river is also channelized by flood control chutes, which have usurped its ability to function as a healthy system. Efforts are underway by the Hoosic River Ecosystem Project Partnership to remediate the river through the chutes and subsequent efforts should also be made to protect the streams that feed the river. Through implementation of the Riverfront regulations of the MA Wetlands Protection Act, and through local conservation efforts and potentially through land acquisition, stream corridors should be protected for both water quality and wildlife purposes.

Need to Provide Linkages Between Protected Areas

Adams is fortunate to have vast forest resources, many of which are protected by state and municipally owned land. Primarily, areas to the west of town associated with the Mt. Greylock Reservation and to the east of town associated with Savoy State Forest also protect significant biological, ecological and scenic resources. However, the areas are not adequately linked for the protection of mobile animal species and contiguous ecosystems (Refer to the Open Space and Ecological Resources Maps). Adams' dense downtown development and the position of Rt.8 along the river provide challenges to developing adequate wildlife corridors from east to west. Regardless, there is still a need to protect and provide greenways, especially along streams that can serve as links that add value to the forest resources. Wildlife corridors and greenways along streams also have an added water quality benefit.

While Adams residents did not show overwhelming support of acquiring new lands for open space, they indicated some support for adding to the existing state holdings and focusing protection efforts on stream corridors. In combination, these efforts can go a long way toward improving wildlife corridors.

The Hoosic River itself is a link with the entire Hoosic Watershed. Its function however is impaired by its highly altered and disturbed state. Plans for retrofitting the flood control chutes with a simulated streambed and bioengineered pool and riffle structures are a priority for restoration of this important resource. The Ecosystem Partnership Project will help restore some of the ecological functions as well as provide a link between the resource and the community.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY'S NEEDS

Several different sources were consulted in order to determine the community's conservation and recreational needs including: the community survey, other planning studies, previous open space plans, the town assessors office, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and meetings with the citizens of Adams. The majority of the community's needs are detailed in the Recreational Needs Assessment below. The major themes are summarized here, as are non-recreational community needs.

Need to Improve Recreational Opportunities

Only 13% of survey respondents use town parks for recreation. Adams residents indicate that their use of the parks is low due to a lack of amenities or activities of interest at the parks. Many residents indicate that they leave town to pursue favorite activities like: going to the movies, fitness activities, swimming and skiing. Despite that the majority of park users could walk to a park, most of them take cars to get to the park they are using. Ironically, walking and running are the most popular recreation activities. It appears that local pedestrian patterns do not match up with the layout/location of existing parks. Creation of trails and sidewalks where necessary, or production of a walking tour map that links parks together would enhance walking and running activities in town.

Typical of many communities, Adams has a good selection of recreational opportunities for children and senior citizens, but activities for teens and young adults are lacking. Organized sports activities exist through schools, but there is also a desire for swimming and fitness facilities, a youth center and new picnic areas. A movie theater, bike and nature trails, and concert facilities also appeal to the survey respondents.

In addition to providing activities, Adams needs to improve the safety and quality of recreational opportunities through maintenance and renovation of existing facilities. The town does not have an adequate Management and Acquisition strategy for the Parks Commission and Conservation Commission to help them take advantage of municipal Capital Improvement Budgets. Also, through the Open Space and Recreation Plan the town can improve eligibility and competitiveness for grant applications that improve the parks.

As one example, Renfrew Field is a popular municipal ball field that needs significant upgrades. The fields are used for local high school football and baseball and for community-organized sports as well. Additional facilities include a skateboard park and

a tot lot. A committee was organized in 2001 to develop a master plan that would improve the safety and usability of the park. Plans include a parking lot to remove recreation-based parking from the local residential streets, upgrading the lighting to modern standards, making the facility ADA compliant, adding basketball courts, improving playground safety, and generally making maintenance upgrades.

Need to Improve Park Access and Access to the Hoosic River

Access to parks in Adams is limited for certain populations. ADA accessibility is of great concern as many park facilities are out-of-date and deteriorating. In addition, little handicapped parking is available and parking overall is limited. The most popular parks in Adams are not in walking distance for most residents therefore they must have adequate parking facilities to accommodate their users.

The Ashuwillticook Rail Trail will have a positive impact on recreational access and amenities. The trail project Phase II is underway and will be completed as far north as Hoosac Street, just north of the Town Hall by fall 2003. A proposed extension of the trail into North Adams would enhance recreational linkages between the town and the city. The vision for additional walking and biking trails in Adams would link to this regional trail and provide safe routes to popular destinations like Greylock Glen. A study of circulation patterns in downtown Adams will lead to development of a network of walking and biking trails to connect neighborhoods with schools, parks and neighboring communities. Maps that illustrate walking/biking routes would enhance these activities in town.

Development plans for downtown include improving visibility of the river and providing recreational access to the river. A greenway or linear park along the river that links to the Ashuwillticook trail will greatly improve the visibility and value of this resource. The Ecosystem Project Partnership will evaluate proposed remediation alternatives for the flood control chutes in the Hoosic River. The group will encourage alternatives that will increase access to the river for fishing and passive recreation. The effort will focus on recapturing the river as a downtown amenity.

Need to Evaluate Zoning and Bylaw Changes to Protect Adams' Heritage

Development patterns that are evident in Berkshire County and beginning to appear in Adams pose particular threats to Adams' downtown character and rural heritage. While 26% of citizens providing input would like to see more residential growth, sprawl development and "Approval Not Required" subdivisions are eating away at farmed and forested lands along rural roadways outside of the urban center. As these developments encroach on natural resources, they could be partially mitigated through municipal regulations and tax incentive programs to protect open space and community character, and to provide recreational access.

Historical properties and districts add distinct character and a link to Adams' industrial past. A lack of maintenance has led to decrepit buildings and urban decay of areas that

would otherwise be attractive to re-development efforts due to their convenient in-town locations. Town bylaws need to be examined for adequate flexibility for adaptive reuse of historic buildings. 42% of survey respondents would like to see new development occur as re-development in the downtown. Aesthetic improvements such as lighting, benches and trees are also needed to help maintain and regain Adams's character.

Table 7-1. Inventory of Recreational Facilities and Activities In Adams

Site Name	Classification	Walking / Hiking	Biking	Camping	Swimming	Fishing	Baseball/ Softball	Sitting Area	Picnic	Child Playground	Rollerblading	Hunting	Basketball	Tennis	Skate-boarding	Soccer	Golf
Ashuwillticook Rail Trail	Regional Park	X	X					X			X				X		
Bassett Brook Watershed	Conservation Area	X	X														
Bellows Pipe Watershed	Conservation Area	X	X														
East St. Community Ctr.	Community Park							X	X	X							
Greylock Reservation	Regional Park	X	X	X	X			X	X			X					
Savoy Mt. State Forest	Regional Park	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X					
Bowe Field	Regional Park									X							
Hoosac River Floodplain	Conservation Area					X											
Memorial Park	Neighborhood Park							X									
Quality Playground	Neighborhood Park					X				X							
Reid Field	Neighborhood Park						X	X		X							
Renfrew Athletic Field	Regional Park						X	X		X					X	X	
Russell Field	Community Park	X					X	X		X			X	X		X	
Siara Street Field	Neighborhood Park						X										
Town Common	Neighborhood Park							X									
Valley Street Field	Regional Park						X	X								X	
Wacky World	Community Park						X	X		X							
Forest Park Country Club	Golf Course																X
Bellevue Falls	Regional Park				X	X		X									
Non-Public, Non-Accessible Recreational Facilities of Possible Interest																	
Dean Pond	State/Private Land				X				X								
Peck's Falls	State/Private Land				X				X								
Anthony's Pool	Private Land				X				X								
Mill St. Field	Private Land								X							X	

Inventory of Organized Youth Recreational Programs and After-School Programs

CommUNITY Arts Program: UNITY (United, Neighboring, Interdependent, Trusted Youth) was created in 1994 as a forum for middle and high-school aged youth in North Berkshire. UNITY's CommUNITY Arts Program provides opportunities for youth expression and community involvement through a teen-led coffeehouse (The Grooove), writing workshop, and public art program. Projects are guided by an Advisory Board made up of six youth and six adults. Some projects are the following:

- Public Art: UNITY youth have developed three public art projects in the past four years.
- The Grooove: The "Grooove" teen coffeehouse, founded in 1996 by two UNITY teens, continues today under the leadership of students from three area high schools.
- Teen Writing Workshop: The UNITY Teen Writing Workshop brings teen writers together in a safe, open, and thoughtful environment to reflect, create, and share their writing under the guidance of a professional writer.

For more information about UNITY, please call Erica Schmitz, UNITY Program Coordinator, or Elena Traister, UNITY Program Associate, at 413.663.7588.

Adams Youth Basketball: Youth basketball league.

Adams Soccer Club: A member of Massachusetts Youth Soccer, it is an organized youth soccer league for children aged 5 and up.

Boy Scouts of Adams: Youth activities for boys aged 7-20.

Contact the Great Trails Council BSA, 88 Old Windsor Road, Dalton MA, 01226, Telephone (413) - 684-3542.

Dance Centers:

<u>Berkshire Dance Theatre</u>	<u>Dancecapade School of Dance</u>	<u>Karen's School of Dance</u>
34 Commercial Street	39 Park Street	90 Park Street
(413) 743-4645	(413) 743-4439	(413) 743-3183

Girl Scouts of Adams: The Western Massachusetts Girl Scout Council works with girls in the North Berkshire area for the Daisy (kindergarten), Brownie (ages 7 through 9), and Junior (ages 10 through 12) Girl Scout troops. Other short-term positions are available. Contact Diane Houston at 584-2602, ext.18.

Little League & Babe Ruth Baseball of Adams: Offers organized youth baseball for Adams Children aged 9-12 & 13-15 during the spring and summer months. Contact 743-9228 (little league) or 743-4335 (Babe Ruth).

Pop Warner Football: Youth Football League

Special Olympics Berkshire: Special Olympics is dedicated to providing mentally handicapped adults and children ages 8 and up the opportunity to develop physical fitness, courage, and friendship through participation in Olympic-type sports. Volunteers coach participants once a week in a variety of sports. These include soccer, croquet, fishing, basketball, skiing, skating, racewalking, bowling, track and field events, horseshoes, softball, and other sports. Volunteers need not be world-class athletes nor even have previous coaching experience. All that is needed is a desire to have fun. Contact director Chris Solari at 743-5821 or 528-4312.

Youth Center Inc.: Youth Center Inc., located at 20 East St. in Adams, promotes comprehensive, individual development through community-based educational, recreational and supportive activities to families and youth of the community. Contact 413-743-3550. The Center has a number of services and programs available to youth in Adams including the following:

- Drop-In Center: open Monday-Friday from 2-8pm and Saturdays 10am -3pm, which offers kids of all ages a computer lab with Internet access, a game room with a pool table, foosball table, arts and crafts, board games, video games, and a lounge area.
- After School Programs: Homework sessions are available thanks to the internship programs through MCLA. The Youth Center also offers school vacation camps in conjunction with C.T. Plunkett Elementary School, Arts-N-Craft programs, along with various other programs for youth, adults and families. Annual events such as the Family Valentines Day Dance, January Sleepover, and an Easter Egg Hunt are fun events for all members.
- New Facilities: The Youth center will soon have an outdoor playground, with one portion geared for 5- to 12-year-olds, and a second section outfitted with climbing equipment, similar to jungle gyms. Construction of a 20- by 32-foot roof pavilion is set to occur at the site of the old basketball court, six picnic tables, landscaping with post-and-rail fencing and park benches.

Inventory of Adult and Senior Recreational Programs

Adams Council on Aging: The Adams Council on Aging (CoA), located at 20 East St. in Adams, is a Town department which supports a comprehensive network of in-home and community-based services and supportive programs for people sixty years of age and over in the Town of Adams. The Council offers both activities and van service for transportation to activities. The Council is staffed Monday-Friday from 9AM-3PM and is eager to do be available to seniors, and may be contacted at the telephone number listed above. Some of the recreational opportunities it supports are the following (please call 413-743-8333 for more information):

- The Adams Senior Day Program & CONGREGATE MEAL SITE: The Adams Senior Day Program provides a comfortable place for socialization for the seniors in the community. Daily activities include: craft work, music, games, singing, exercise, cards, special outings and places of interest to visit. There are also nutritious meals provided by the Elder Services Mealsite, for a \$1.75 suggested donation. The program operates from 9:00am to 3:00pm, Monday through Friday.
- Adams Walking Club: 22 members, open to all ages and registered with the Walking Club of America.
- Art Classes: led by instructor Mary Remillard periodically.
- BINGO: The COA sponsors two official BINGO sessions at the Community Center every week on Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:30AM.
- Educational Speakers and Programs
- Quilting: There are two quilting groups who meet at the Community Center, the Nimble Quilters, who meet Thursdays at 7pm, and Adams Quilting, who meet Tuesdays at 1.
- Library Outreach: In cooperation with the Adams Free Library.
- Line Dancing: Line dancing classes are normally available Wednesdays at 1 O'Clock at the east Street Community Center.
- Van Service: The COA offers van service for seniors to use for various informal social and recreational purposes.
- Adams Senior Club: The Adams senior club is very active in town and is always looking for new members. The club sponsors monthly bus trips to various locations such as the Mohegan Sun, as well as mystery tours. The club also holds weekly BINGO at the Community Center on Thursdays at 1:15 PM. Contact the COA at 743-8333 for more information.

Mt. Greylock Garden Club of Adams: Plant flowers around town in summer and fall. In winter decorate baskets with pine boughs. Contact Ms. Michelle Wellspeak.

RECREATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Recreational opportunities contribute to the quality of life of Residents of Adams. The Recreational Needs Assessment combines an inventory of public parks and facilities with public input in order to identify recreational needs in Adams. A supply/demand analysis will compare the recreational areas and facilities existing in Adams with demand gained from data on local demographics and public input gained from a recent open space and recreation survey of town residents. The information will be compiled into a final assessment with recommended actions to further recreational opportunities for the Town.

Summary of Recreational Areas in Adams

There are approximately 4,700 total acres of formally designated recreational land in Adams. Most of this land, approximately 4,500 acres, is state owned conservation land or locally managed watershed lands open to hiking. Adams has 9 regional and community parks and 5 municipally owned neighborhood parks open to the public comprising over 25 acres. Many areas of potential recreational use were on private lands not considered parks. *Inventory of Recreational Facilities and Activities in Adams* (see above) lists the recreational facilities within Adams and the activities offered at these parks. The *Description and Inventory of Protected and Unprotected Parcels* lists more detailed information about the neighborhood, community, and regional parks within the Town of Adams.

Assessment of Current Recreational Facilities

In order to determine how the community assesses the state of recreation within Town, the 2002 Open Space and Recreation Survey was sent to over 600 randomly selected households in Adams. Of the 600 surveys, 200 were returned and the complete results are included in the appendix. According to the survey, Public parks in Adams are popular for their active and passive recreational amenities. The most frequently visited recreational area in town is reported as Greylock Glen (mentioned by 26% of park visitors). Russell Field, Valley Street Field, and Wacky World were the next most popular parks mentioned. The most popular recreational activities in town were walking/running (79% of responses), rest/relaxation (44%), and bicycling (31%). Hiking, fishing, movie watching, and swimming were also popular activities that were strongly represented in the survey. Sports facilities were the major attraction for those using the parks, while residents that do not use the parks identified lack of interest in the facilities and programs available at the Town's parks.

Assessment of Current Recreational Programs

Adams currently has a wide variety of passive and active recreational programs and services available to its youth and its elderly. According to Town officials, the current recreational programs are successful due to a combination of town funding, organizational volunteers, and new members for the programs. Along with these three factors, continued flexibility must remain in the programming in order to keep them as popular and as relevant as they currently are. The largest demonstrated need is to further the spread of information about the organized recreational opportunities available in Adams. Many responses to the Town of Adams 2002 Open Space and Recreation Survey noted that recreational facilities and programs are most adequate for children and the elderly, while teens and adults are left with few recreational options in town that are of interest. While facilities such as Wacky World offer play for younger children, survey responses view existing youth recreational programs to be overwhelmingly sports-based - excluding those not interested in sports - and geared for children aged 8 and older - leaving out younger children.

Assessment of Demographics and Recreational Demand

Population Trends

According to census data, the population in Adams has been falling by an average of 5% every 10 years since 1970, while the population of the surrounding area of Berkshire County has been falling by an average of 3% every 10 years. Population loss has not occurred evenly over age groups in town, and the greatest decrease in population since 1980 has been in the 0-24 age group, which has fallen by 27%. The median age has risen sharply from 38.6 in 1990 to 41.3 in 2000.

Table 7-2: Town of Adams Population By Age 1980-2000

Age	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980-2000
0-24	3515	2838	2560	-27%
25-64	4980	4557	4449	-11%
65+	1886	2050	1800	-5%
TOTAL	10381	9445	8809	-15%

Source: US Census Bureau

School-Aged Residents and K-12 Students from Adams

Recent data suggests that the decrease in younger residents has bottomed out. As the population has dropped, the number of residents under age 18 has remained steady at 1,996 persons in 1990 and 1,977 persons in 2000. The number of school children from Adams has increased steadily since 1990 from 1,266 students in 1990, to 1394 students in 1995 and then 1,451 students in 2000.

Table 7-3: K-12 Pupils from Adams 1990-2000

	1990	1995	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Population	9,445	8,986	8,809	- 6.7%
Number of Pupils	1,266	1,394	1,451	+ 14.6%

Source: Massachusetts Dept of Revenue Municipal Data Bank

Future Population Forecasts

According to Forecasts done by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the population of Adams is expected to continue to decline through 2020, and the average age of the population is expected to continue to increase. Recreational facilities will need to address the needs of the expanding number of residents in age groups above 45.

Demand Registered From The Adams 2002 Open Space & Recreation Survey

The number of parks, and the facilities existing within parks were thought inadequate by approximately 16% of respondents to the Adams 2002 Open Space and Recreation Survey. Thirteen percent (13%) of respondents feel the Town's parks and recreational facilities are adequate. Indoor and outdoor recreational facilities in town were seen to be most adequate for young children and elderly, and least adequate for adults and teens. The greatest inadequacy in Town Recreational Programs, as reported by 36% of survey respondents, is the lack of Indoor Recreational Facilities for Youth. Several questions noted a need for swimming facilities within town. According to the survey, Town residents feel that the most needed additions to the Town's existing parks are more picnic areas (48%), more swimming areas (34%), nature trails (32%), sitting areas (29%). Rest rooms were the most popular write-in answer as necessary additions. If new parks or facilities are developed in town, the largest group of respondents, 49% of all responses, felt that there should be some type of swimming facility developed either indoors (27%) or outdoors (37%). Residents also would encourage the development of a movie theater (46%), Bike Trails (37%), Concert facilities (36%), and Picnic areas (34%).

Recreational Needs Assessment: Recommendations and Actions***Recommendation #1: Recreational Opportunities for the Entire Community***

The Town of Adams is home to households of various income levels, especially among the lower incomes (\$30,000 and under) as the town recorded the second-lowest median income of the 32 Berkshire County municipalities in the 1989 economic census. Recreational facilities must continue to serve the needs of all income levels.

Recommendation #2: Access to Parks

One way to improve recreational opportunities for the entire community is to improve pedestrian access to the town's variety of recreational resources. Improved pedestrian access to public recreational facilities can improve the quality of life of Town residents of

all ages, abilities and incomes, and is a specific concern for the Town of Adams. In the recent 2002 Open Space and Recreational Survey for Adams, it appears that residents are increasingly reliant on their cars to get to recreational areas. Of the sixty-three percent of survey respondents who had been to a Town park in the past year, Eighty percent (80%) of them reported that they got there by car. However, fifty four percent (54%) of respondents could walk to a park if necessary. Walking to a park is not possible for fourteen percent (14%) of them. The results suggest that respondents prefer to drive to local parks even though many of them could walk if necessary. Results to the survey lead one to question why walking or biking to a park is so much less desirable than driving there, especially upon observing that walking/running was reported as the most popular recreational activity in Town – as noted by 79% of the survey respondents - and biking was the third most popular activity.

The results to the survey reinforce the goal listed in the *2001 Sustainable Adams Plan* of utilizing the Ashuwillticook Bike Trail as a recreational “spine” through the town, which may be expanded upon to invigorate biking and pedestrian networks throughout Adams. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission’s 2002 Berkshire Bicycling and Walking Plan also outlines a number of ways to improve bicycling and walking within the Town that may be both effective and inexpensive. A preliminary action may be to organize interested residents and town officials to work towards enhancing the walking and biking experience within town. Town residents and officials could gather in such a committee to develop a specific priority list of the parks that are most in need of safer pedestrian access. (According to the 2002 Survey, the most popular parks were Greylock Glen, Russell Field, Valley St, and Wacky World.) This list would document currently used and potentially useable access routes, bike routes, and pedestrian paths in and around the parks and the Ashuwillticook Bike trail. A plan may result in formalizing a strategy to increase the ability of all residents to access the town’s variety of parks and recreational resources in a safer manner.

Recommendation #3: Examine Possibilities for More Indoor/Outdoor Swimming Opportunities

The 2002 Open Space and Recreation Survey documents a clear public concern for swimming areas in Adams. In the survey, swimming was one of the most popular recreational activities for residents, conducted by 25% of all respondents to the survey. However, no public swimming pools or facilities exist in Adams, and swimming was noted as the most popular recreational activity, next to movie watching, that residents conducted outside of town due to the lack of any local facility. The lack of Indoor or outdoor swimming facilities was expressed by forty-nine percent (49%) of all respondents. Such a high number suggests that even people who do not normally swim feel that there should be more opportunities to swim in town, and possibly suggests that more residents would visit swimming areas if an area existed and they had the opportunity to do so.

The need for swimming facilities in Adams is supported by the *Inventory of Recreational Facilities and Activities In Adams*, (see above) and is expressed in both state and regional

documents as a recreational concern for the area. The inventory shows a lack of swimming pools in Adams, and that swimming areas in Adams are local “swimming holes” on private lands with limited, if not restricted access via dead end roads or dirt paths. Anthony’s Pool was the one public swimming and picnicking area for the Town of Adams, but it was closed several years ago and remains unused and restricted.

The most recent Statewide Comprehensive Open Space and Recreation Plan (SCORP), 1988, identified swimming and tennis as the two recreational activities in Berkshire County with the smallest supply compared to demand. The 2000 Regional Plan for the Berkshires, conducted by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, goes even further in deeming the quality of water-based activities as the “biggest identified [recreational] concern in the region.”

Recommended actions on this matter would be to combine the desire for more swimming areas with one of the two other major desires of the town - either indoor recreational facilities for youth (expressed by 36% as the largest inadequacy of current facilities), or the need for more outdoor picnic areas (expressed by forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents to the survey). Indoor and outdoor facilities vary greatly in price and feasibility. The former Anthony’s pool presents an interesting opportunity for reviving outdoor swimming and picnicking on town-owned property that could be examined more closely. However, there are several other lands which may be considered for feasibility studies for expanded swimming and picnicking such as Bowe field, which has plenty of acreage but is currently inaccessible most of the year, Pecks or Bellevue Falls which currently have only informal water areas, or the Community Center on East Street, which has town-owned land with parking and grounds that are currently underused and overgrown. An additional action would be to examine the possibility of a set time when the pool at Hoosic Valley High School (HVHS) for residents to use. Past attempts for “family swim” times at HVHS have been short lived and unsuccessful, possibly do to both the lack of publicity and the lack of a standard, unchanging schedule of hours when the pool is open.

Recommendation #4: Ensuring the Quality of Town Parks: A Facilities-Updating and Maintenance Plan

The quality of recreation within Adams is closely linked to the condition of its parks. Clean, attractive and useable public spaces may be beneficial to the quality of life of an entire neighborhood. Use of such a park may become a part of everyday life, and the area can be held with pride as the social and recreational center of the neighborhood. Conversely, underused parks may be a burden. According to the 2002 Recreational Survey, cleanliness and maintenance of parks in Adams is seen as satisfactory, gaining an overall score of 4.8 out of 10, but the programs and facilities available at the parks were two of the three least satisfactory Town conditions mentioned.

Adams residents responding to the survey report a problem in the usability of public spaces in Adams for everyday recreation. The most prominent example of this is that the two most popular places for residents of Adams to do most of their recreation is either at

home (52%) or out of town (42%). Only thirteen percent (13%) of respondents answered that most of their recreation takes place in a public park in Adams. One reason for the under-use of parks in Adams comes simply in the fact that there is nothing for people to do there. In fact, “nothing of interest available” at town parks, as commented by 10% of respondents, was the number one reason mentioned by residents who haven’t been to a Town park recently. The three largest attractions for park users were sports facilities (25%), walking/biking trails (21%), and sitting/relaxation areas (21%). Underused neighborhood parks in Adams, such as Siara St. and Quality St, offer none of these attractions and are being maintained simply as empty lots. Mowing and trimming these unused lots costs the town money that would be better spent making the park less bland and more relevant to neighborhood use.

Adams currently conducts its maintenance on a daily basis, and does not have a formal maintenance plan for its inventory of public areas. It would be beneficial to for the town to formalize plan that includes guidelines for consistent upkeep of all its public spaces for usefulness as well as maintenance. It would also be useful for the maintenance plan to include a timeline for updating park equipment, a strategy to incorporate neighborhood desires in these updates, and design guidelines to ensure that new facilities need minimal upkeep.

Recommendation #5: Assist Local Landowners Gain Tax-Breaks For Preserving Their Recreational Lands Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 61B

The recreational land classification program under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 61B is designed to encourage the preservation of the Commonwealth's open space and promote recreational land uses. It offers significant local tax benefits to property owners willing to make a long-term commitment to preserving land in an undeveloped condition or for use for outdoor activities. In exchange for these benefits, the city or town in which the land is located is given the right to recover some of the tax benefits afforded the owner when the land is removed from classification and an option to purchase the property should the land be sold or used for any other purpose other than to maintain it as open space or for recreational use. According to the Adams Parks Commission and the Inventory of Recreational Facilities and Activities In Adams, much of the recreation occurring in Adams has historically been conducted informally in trails, swimming holes, and snowmobile paths that are on private property with the consent of the landowners. Chapter 61B is an option that provides a tax-break for private landowners in town who add to the quality of public recreation in town. It is for those who wish to allow recreational uses on their land, and would like to protect their land from development but do not otherwise receive tax breaks because they currently do not farm or forest their land.

MANAGEMENT NEEDS AND POTENTIAL CHANGE OF USE

Through communication with the Select Board, the Community Development Office, the Parks Commission and the Conservation Commission, the following opportunities for improved communications were identified:

There is a need to develop an Acquisition and Management Strategy for the Parks and Conservation Commissions.

The Parks and Conservation Commissions should have the opportunity to provide input to the town's five-year capital improvement programming process.

- A fund should be established for recreational site planning and development purposes.
- Outreach programs to the public and opportunities for public input, such as through an "Adopt-a-Park" programs would increase visibility and support for parks.
- The town should revisit consideration of the Community Preservation Act as real estate and development markets change in the future.
- The town should review current real estate holdings for appropriate uses and dispose of unneeded parcels in favor of acquiring key conservation lands.
- Town maintenance programs and aesthetic upgrades need to be coordinated between planning, public works, and historical preservation efforts.
- Town zoning and subdivision bylaws need to be evaluated for their consistency with revitalization plans and conservation needs.

SECTION 8: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

The five goals and nineteen objectives are derived from the public process of two town surveys and discussion with the Adams Parks Department and Department of Community Development. The formed goals and objectives articulate the desires of the town and address concerns for the future.

GOAL 1: PRESERVE ADEQUATE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL LANDS TO KEEP PACE WITH THE TOWN'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT WHILE PROTECTING ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES.

Objective: Acquire and enhance new open space lands.

Objective: Promote maintenance and use standards for Town-owned land; Set usage goals for parcels with clear open space or recreational value.

Objective: Establish more stable funding resources to maintain the Town's existing park facilities and to adequately plan for the acquisition and development of additional recreational lands.

GOAL 2: INCREASE PUBLIC USE AND AWARENESS OF ADAMS' OPEN SPACE RESOURCES THROUGH INCREASED PUBLIC ACCESS AND STEWARDSHIP.

Objective: Ensure access to all public or publicly-available open space for all demographic groups.

Objective: Improve the public's access to existing open space resources in Adams by implementing enhanced wayfinding and interpretive signage.

Objective: Consider creating private landowner incentives for granting access to or through their lands to help the Town to create a network of trails and access routes linking open space and recreational parcels for the use and enjoyment of all residents.

Objective: Amend the Town's Zoning Bylaws to establish an "Open Space Overlay Zoning District," which restricts development activities within designated corridors to preserve the opportunity for linking open space and recreational lands.

GOAL 3: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO ADEQUATELY MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF TOWN RESIDENTS.

Objective: Develop a comprehensive system of greenways, trails, and bikepaths to enhance recreational opportunities within Town and promote alternative forms of transportation.

Objective: Develop an aggressive program of active recreational opportunities to enhance Town efforts toward tourist-based economic development.

Objective: Improve active recreation opportunities for all residents in Adams.

Objective: Enhance passive recreation opportunities within Adams.

GOAL 4: PROTECT THE TOWN’S HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES FOR THE ENJOYMENT AND INSTRUCTION OF FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Objective: Preserve the Town’s historic character and encourage development that promotes the historic “small town” identity of Adams

Objective: Protect the Town’s Scenic Resources.

Objective: Preserve and Enhance the Town’s Historic Resources.

Objective: Preserve and Enhance Existing Neighborhoods within Adams to Provide Stronger Identities, Establish a High Degree of Visual Quality and More Useable Social Spaces and Recreational Amenities

GOAL 5: PRESERVE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTALLY-SENSITIVE LANDS AND WATER RESOURCES IN ADAMS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Objective: Preserve and Improve Air Quality

Objective: Prevent and Reduce Pollution of Surface Waters

Objective: Implement an Effective Source Control Program to Reduce Nonpoint Source Pollution of Water Resources

Objective: Protect Limited Land Resources within the Town from Inappropriate Development by Embracing Wise Stewardship Practices

SECTION 9: FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

Introduction

This Five-Year Action Plan addresses each Open Space and Recreation Plan goal and objective with one or more actions. Continued Town commitment and citizen support are essential to accomplishing Plan goals.

GOAL 1: PRESERVE ADEQUATE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL LANDS TO KEEP PACE WITH THE TOWN'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT WHILE PROTECTING ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES.

OBJECTIVE #1A: Acquire and Enhance New Open Space and Recreation Lands

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Identify key parcels likely lost as open space if Town did not acquire them.	CONSERVATION COMMISSION	2004	
Identify potential funding sources for the purchase of the Mill Street Picnic Grounds.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; SELECTMEN	2003-2004	
Encourage subdivisions of five (5) or more lots to set aside or reserve a minimum of ten (10%) percent of their land area for community open space. Consider amending Adams Zoning Bylaw to require minimum open space for any residential development project.	PLANNING BOARD	2005	
Develop and implement a comprehensive rating system—based on threat of development, alternative protections, proximity to other open space, etc.—to select priority open space for acquisition.	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR; CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE	2004	

Develop “management & acquisition strategy” to implement recommendations in the Town’s <i>2003 Open Space and Recreation Plan</i> to strategically target parcels for acquisition, purchase of development rights, and easements for acquisition.	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	2005	
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OBJECTIVE #1B: Establish more stable funding resources to maintain the Town’s existing park facilities and to adequately plan for the acquisition and development of additional recreational lands.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Involve the Parks Commission and the Conservation Commission more closely with the Town’s five-year capital improvement programming process. Ensure that both Commissions develop a “needs” list of park and open space improvements consistent with the <i>Adams Open Space and Recreation Plan</i> recommendations, as well as open space resources identified for acquisition.	PARKS COMMISSION; CONSERVATION COMMISSION; CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM COMMITTEE	2004	
Set aside at least \$10,000 at the beginning of each fiscal year for recreational site planning and development purposes: undertaking appraisals, site surveys and design, and legal fees, as needed.	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR; SELECTMEN	2004	
Develop an “Adopt a Park” program to enlist the support of volunteer groups in maintaining park facilities, cleaning up litter, preventing defacement, etc.	PARKS COMMISSION	2005	
Consider seeking state authority to adopt a real estate transfer fee to be applied to the amount over \$100,000 of each real estate transfer to fund the development of land for	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR; SELECTMEN	2006-2007	

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
recreational uses and the acquisition of open space, conservation land, land for public drinking water supplies, bicycling and walking trails, and recreational lands.			
Develop an attractive catalog of needed park amenities (e.g. benches, planters, flags, water fountains, water play areas, scoreboards, bike racks) to direct gifts in memoriam and solicit donor interest in the Town's parks and open space resources.	PARKS COMMISSION; CEMETERY COMMISSION; TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	2004-2005	

GOAL 2: INCREASE PUBLIC USE AND AWARENESS OF ADAMS' OPEN SPACE RESOURCES THROUGH INCREASED PUBLIC ACCESS AND STEWARDSHIP

OBJECTIVE #2A: Ensure access to all public or publicly available open space for all demographic groups.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Investigate opportunities to increase and improve parking, including handicapped, at open space sites.	PARKS COMMISSION	ON-GOING	
Work with the Council on Aging to implement frequent trips for elderly residents to the Town's open space resources. Ensure there is an adequate supply of benches at these sites for elderly use.	PARKS COMMISSION	2005-2006	
Continue to participate in the Hoosic River Ecosystem Partnership to explore opportunities to enhance public access to the River, especially throughout the Downtown.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2003-2006	
Revisit and update the Town's accessibility plan for all	PARKS COMMISSION	2007	

public open spaces to ensure access to people with disabilities.		2007	
Continue to improve Town park facilities so that they meet ADA accessibility standards.	PARKS COMMISSION; DPW	ON-GOING	

OBJECTIVE #2B: Improve the public's access to existing open space resources in Adams by implementing enhanced way-finding and interpretive signage.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Establish a standard signage system for hiking and biking trails in Adams & implement system components including identification and directional signs, maps, and simple guidebooks or informational pamphlets.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2004-2005	
Enhance distribution of Adams Favorite Walks & Hikes brochure. Develop a companion brochure to outline Town-wide hiking and biking opportunities.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE	2006	
Implement key components of Adams Communications Master Plan relative to installing freestanding directional signage in downtown, which identifies location of important open space resources.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE	2004-2005	

OBJECTIVE #2C: Amend the Town's Zoning Bylaws to restrict development activities within designated areas, preserving the opportunity for linking open space and recreational lands.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Investigate establishing all existing perennial stream corridors as the basis for a proposed "Open Space Overlay Zoning District."	PLANNING BOARD; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2006-2007	

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Require open space and/or greenway evaluations as part of any future development proposal.	PLANNING BOARD	2006	

GOAL 3: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO ADEQUATELY MEET THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF TOWN RESIDENTS

OBJECTIVE #3A: Develop a comprehensive system of greenways, trails and bike paths to enhance recreational opportunities within Town and promote alternative forms of transportation.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Prepare a plan for greenways, trails, and bikepaths to connect major recreation facilities within Town and neighboring communities.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; PARKS COMMISSION	2004	
Work with Berkshire Bikepath Council and the City of North Adams to extend the Ashuwillticook Recreation Trail to connect Downtown Adams to Downtown North Adams.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2003-2004	
Using the Ashuwillticook Trail as a spine, develop a network of cross-town bike paths to connect residential neighborhoods to schools, parks, other recreational sites, and the downtown.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE	2005-2006	
Work with the U.S. Corps of Engineers to develop a greenway and/or linear park concept in conjunction with the Hoosic River restoration project.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE	2005-2008	
Work with current property owners to develop the "Pine Brook Greenway." Investigate every opportunity to connect the greenway with other recreational amenities including the	CONSERVATION COMMISSION; PARKS COMMISSION	2006	

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
proposed Ashuwillticook Trail (extension).			
Connect Veterans Memorial Park on Columbia Street with the proposed Ashuwillticook Trail (extension) by restoring the unattractive, former drainage area that lies in between; Create an attractive bridge over the drainage way for both pedestrians and bicyclists.	CONSERVATION COMMISSION; PARKS COMMISSION	2005	
Work with Schumacher Company to protect lands associated with the proposed Hoxie Brook Mill Trail extending from downtown to Greylock Glen. Restore the historic Hall Dam structure through a combination of private funding and environmental protection resources for a partial breach of the dam.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE; SELECTMEN	2006-2007	

OBJECTIVE #3B: Develop an aggressive program of active recreational opportunities to enhance Town efforts toward tourist-based economic development.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Explore opportunities to re-establish the Thunderbolt Ski Trail. Work with local winter sports groups to develop a racing event that will attract both racing participants and spectators to Adams.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; SELECTMEN	2005	
Install bike racks at key locations throughout the downtown and at Town facilities. Undertake other efforts to secure Adams as a bicycle-friendly and pedestrian-friendly community.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE	2003-2004	
Work with MassDevelopment and DEM to develop cross-country skiing facilities at the Greylock Glen site.	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR; SELECTMEN	2004-2005	

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Coordinate with the Friends of the Glen and the Berkshire Chapter of the NE Mountain Biking Association to expand upon the “Mount Greylock Go ‘Round” Mountain Bike Rides (first held in 2002) to a series of mountain biking events held yearly in Adams.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE – EVENTS PLANNING	2003-2004	
Work with DEM and the Friends of the Glen to develop a brochure of mountain biking trails within Adams.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE	2005	
Explore opportunities to implement an environmentally sound tramway system to the summit of Mount Greylock.	PARKS COMMISSION	2003-2004	
In conjunction with the Hoosic River Restoration Project, explore the potential for the flood chutes to provide seasonal kayaking opportunities. Consider developing a “Shoot the Chutes” event open for experienced kayakers.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE	2006-2007	

OBJECTIVE #3C: Improve active recreation opportunities for all residents in Adams.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Develop additional basketball and tennis facilities within the Town’s existing parks (priority Renfrew Field – basketball; Russell Field – tennis).	PARKS COMMISSION; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2003-2005	
Actively pursue grant funding to implement the Renfrew Field Master Plan. Acquire the two adjacent parcels on Friend Street to develop the parking and picnic facilities as proposed in the Plan.	PARKS COMMISSION; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2003-2005	
Develop additional youth sports playing fields for soccer, football, baseball, and other sports as needed.	PARKS COMMISSION; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	ON-GOING	

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Identify reasons for limited participation in previously sponsored “family swim nights.” Investigate ways to increase opportunities for general public use of the Hoosac Valley H.S. indoor swimming pool.	PARKS COMMISSION	2004	
Upgrade playground equipment in all parks consistent with NPPS and CPSC standards, and install new equipment such as ground-level trampolines.	PARKS COMMISSION; DPW	ON-GOING	
Investigate opportunities to convert Anthony’s Pool to a public outdoor pool for Adams.	PARKS COMMISSION	2005-2006	
Work with the Youth Center and the Adams-Cheshire School District to develop and carry out appropriate youth programs for certain active recreational pursuits.	PARKS COMMISSION; YOUTH CENTER; SCHOOL DISTRICT	ON-GOING	

OBJECTIVE #3D: Enhance passive recreation opportunities within Adams.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
In conjunction with Downtown revitalization efforts, aggressively pursue opportunities to develop additional pocket parks in Adams, and install benches, outdoor game tables, attractive planters, and other public amenities.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2004-2006	
Provide new picnic facilities within the Town’s existing parks. Develop new picnic locations along scenic roadway segments and at other special places within Town.	PARKS COMMISSION; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	ON-GOING	
Increase benches and other seating opportunities within Town cemeteries, particularly Maple Street Cemetery and Bellevue to provide attractive, quiet areas for contemplation.	ADAMS CEMETERY COMMISSION	2004-2007	

GOAL 4: PROTECT THE TOWN'S HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES FOR THE ENJOYMENT AND INSTRUCTION OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

OBJECTIVE #4A: Preserve the Town's historic character and encourage development that promotes the historic "small town" identity of Adams.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Develop new signage and community appearance standards as an amendment to the Town's Zoning Bylaws.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; PLANNING BOARD	2004	
Evaluate historic district zoning for the Park Street and Summer Street business districts to preserve and enhance the existing streetscape.	ADAMS HISTORICAL COMMISSION	2005	
Review zoning for the Downtown and other settled areas to ensure there is adequate flexibility to encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; PLANNING BOARD	2004-2005	
Explore opportunities along the Summer Street business district to install period lighting fixtures to enhance existing architectural resources.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2007	
Develop and implement a maintenance program for public improvements like street furniture, street trees and other landscaping, etc., to ensure their timely rehabilitation or replacement.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE; DPW	2006	

OBJECTIVE #4B: Protect the Town's Scenic Resources.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Implement the "Windows on Greylock" concept from the Adams Communications Master Plan and use proceeds to	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	2005	

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
fund park/open space development needs in Town.			
Work with volunteers to photographically document important visual resources in Adams to compare with past and future photographs. Develop a display during Susan B. Anthony Celebration and other events and at Town Hall.	ADAMS HISTORICAL COMMISSION; ADAMS HISTORICAL SOCIETY	2004	
Identify the Town's most important views and vistas to protect. Incorporate this analysis into the Town's Master Plan process and future updates of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; PLANNING BOARD	2004	

OBJECTIVE #4C: Preserve and Enhance Existing Neighborhoods within Adams to Provide Stronger Identities, Establish a High Degree of Visual Quality and More Useable Social Spaces and Recreational Amenities.

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
As part of the Town Master Plan update, develop neighborhood quality indices to evaluate neighborhoods within Adams on an on-going basis; Park and open space resources should be an important quality indicator.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; SELECTMEN	2004	
Implement a comprehensive and on-going neighborhood reinvestment program to bring neighborhood parks facilities up to current standards.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.	ON-GOING	
Work with investor-owners to rehabilitate existing multi-family structures within Adams to maintain the integrity of the Town's mill history and improve the living environment of low- and moderate-income residents.	ADAMS HOUSING REHAB PROGRAM	ON-GOING	
Redesign existing or secure new community open space to serve as an organizing element of existing neighborhoods.	PLANNING BOARD	2005-2006	

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Restore, as appropriate, natural environments along stream corridors and other open space edges within existing residential areas.	PLANNING BOARD; CONSERVATION COMMISSION	2005-2006	

GOAL 5: PRESERVE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTALLY-SENSITIVE LANDS AND WATER RESOURCES IN ADAMS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

OBJECTIVE #5A: Preserve and Improve Air Quality

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Identify barriers to pedestrian and bicycle travel within Town and develop implementation strategies to overcome such barriers for these travel modes.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.		
Promote Adams as a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly Town.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE		
Explore opportunities with Berkshire Regional Transit Authority to implement an electric shuttle between Downtown and other destination points within Adams.	DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE		

OBJECTIVE #5B: Prevent and Reduce Pollution of Surface Waters

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Minimize the amount of impervious surface created as a result of development consistent with planned land uses.	PLANNING BOARD		
Enhance the Town's ability to address erosion and sedimentation through education, improved site planning, and regulation. Minimizing grading and retaining existing	PLANNING BOARD		

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
tree cover shall be preferred means of limiting erosion.			
Implement a best management practices (BMP) program for Adams.	PLANNING BOARD; DPW		
Amend the Subdivision Regulations to more effectively address stormwater quantity and quality management.	PLANNING BOARD; DPW		
Promote a natural systems approach to stormwater management.	PLANNING BOARD; DPW		
Explore opportunities as sites redevelop to provide some initial treatment of the “first flush” within the Town’s storm drainage system.	CONSERVATION COMMISSION		

OBJECTIVE 5C: Implement an Effective Source Control Program to Reduce Nonpoint Source Pollution of Water Resources

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Conduct more frequent and routine street and parking lot sweeping to minimize the amounts of sand, road salt, and debris entering water resources through the drainage system.	DPW		
Implement regular catch basin cleaning and other maintenance activities for existing stormwater management facilities.	DPW		
Minimize application of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides to municipally owned lawns and landscaped areas.	DPW		
Implement an effective outreach program to educate residents and businesses about the connections between storm drains and Town surface waters.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.; CONSERVATION COMMISSION		

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Work to obtain funding from DEP's s.319 water quality implementation grants to develop and implement an effective source control program Town-wide.	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.		

OBJECTIVE #5D: Protect Limited Land Resources within the Town from Inappropriate Development by Embracing Wise Stewardship Practices

Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Status
Encourage compact, efficient patterns of development to minimize the consumption of land and preserve the Town's historic character.	PLANNING BOARD; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.		
Promote a mix of land uses to more efficiently and effectively use existing land areas, reduce energy usage, and facilitate pedestrian travel.	PLANNING BOARD; COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.		
Work to concentrate land uses within developed areas served by public utilities by promoting infill and the redevelopment of developed properties.	PLANNING BOARD		
Consider amending the Town's Subdivision Regulations to require open space subdivision provisions.	PLANNING BOARD		

SECTION 10: PUBLIC COMMENTS

Section 10 is reserved for public comments that will be finalized by the Open Space and Recreation Committee. Letters of review from the Planning Board, Select Board, Conservation Commission, and Berkshire Regional Planning Commission must be included with the final report prior to its submission to the Commonwealth. Mandated approval from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services is required before requests can be made for certain grant assistance programs.

SECTION 11: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A: ADAMS 2002 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION SURVEY

ADAMS 2002 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION SURVEY RESULTS REPORT

In June of 2002, the Town of Adams randomly selected approximately 600 residents to participate in a survey to assess how community residents feel about Town parks and recreation opportunities. Of the 600 surveys mailed, exactly 200 were returned and tabulated. The results are presented in this report.

QUALITY OF LIFE IN ADAMS

The largest number of respondents to the survey answered that quality of life in Adams is “good” (48%), average (24%) or excellent (20%) as compared to the few that answered poor (6%) or very poor (2%).

The overwhelming majority (79%) of residents describe Adams as “safe”, historic (54%) or family-oriented (53%). On the other hand, respondents overwhelmingly did NOT view Adams as vacation-oriented (only 2%), urban (2%), or diverse (6%).

The greatest advantages to living in Adams were considered to be the Town’s rural nature and open spaces (80% of responses), neighborhoods (76%), and school system (70%). The greatest disadvantages were seen as job opportunities (99%), downtown (67%), and availability of services (62%).

The most common specific reason given for living in Adams was “family roots” or “family history” in the town (27%), while safety (9%) and small-town feel (8%) were also listed.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF ADAMS’ RESIDENTS

Most respondents did not conduct their recreational activities at town parks or municipal facilities. Most respondents recreate at home (52%) or out of town (47%), and a few recreate in the neighborhood (24%). Only thirteen percent (13%) of respondents recreate in a local park.

The most popular recreation activity by respondents was “walking and running” (79%). The more passive “rest and relaxation” was the second most popular activity (44%). Bicycling (31%), fishing (28%), hiking (28%), “movies and concerts” (27%) and swimming (25%) were the other most popular recreation activities of respondents.

Almost three out of every four respondents (71%) reported that they recreate outside of town. The most popular activities that residents conduct outside of town are “cinema” (27%), swimming (20%), fitness activities (13%), and skiing (13%).

Indoor and outdoor recreational facilities in town were seen to be most adequate for young children and elderly, and least adequate for adults and teens. The greatest inadequacy in Town Recreational Programs was the lack of Indoor Recreational Facilities for Youth (36%). The number of parks, (17%), and the facilities existing within parks, (16%), were thought inadequate, while 13% feel the Town's parks and recreational facilities are adequate.

The most frequently visited recreational area in town is reported as Greylock Glen (mentioned by 26% of park visitors). Russell Field (23%), Valley Street Field (18%), and Wacky World (14%) were the next most popular parks visited by respondents.

Eighty percent (80%) of respondents who had been to a park in the last year reported that they got there by car. However, fifty four percent (54%) of respondents could walk to a park if necessary, while fourteen percent (14%) could not walk to a park.

EXPRESSED NEEDS FOR FUTURE PARK FACILITIES IN TOWN

Respondents to the survey feel that the most needed additions to the Town's existing parks are more picnic areas (48%), more swimming areas (34%), nature trails (32%), sitting areas (29%). Rest rooms were the most popular write-in answer as necessary additions.

If new parks or facilities are developed in town, the largest group of respondents, 49% of all responses, felt that there should be some type of swimming facility developed either indoors (27%) or outdoors (37%). Residents also would encourage the development of a movie theater (46%), Bike Trails (37%), Concert facilities (36%), and Picnic areas (34%).

TOWN SUPPORT FOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Respondents were somewhat in favor of a small raise in taxes to construct a community or youth recreation center, with thirty eight percent (38%) in favor, twenty-eight percent opposed (28%) and twenty two percent 22% unsure.

Respondents were decidedly against a similar raise in taxes to protect open space, with forty eight percent (48%) against, (19%) in favor, and twenty one percent (21%) unsure.

Respondents were also had limited support of a need for protecting additional open space (34% in favor, 26% opposed). Respondents in favor of additional protection of open spaces either encouraged additional state-owned land (48% of those in favor) or they had no opinion (42%) as to the method of future protection.

The majority of respondents would support a Town effort to protect farms, forests, and other scenic resources (58%), Fifteen percent (15%) would not support such and action, and fifteen percent (15%) were not sure.

TOWN PRIORITIES FOR CONSERVATION

The top priority of survey respondents was for “protecting drinking water supplies.” The next two priorities were “protecting water quality of streams” and “preserving the beauty of landscape.” Next priorities were “making Hoosic more accessible” as number four and “protecting wildlife habitat” as the fifth highest priority item.

TOWN SUPPORT FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The largest group of survey respondents (33%) was “OK” with the current level of development in town; twenty-six percent (26%) would like to see more residential growth, and (18%) would like to see less growth. Respondents would like to see new development as either redevelopment of the existing downtown (42%) or a mixture of redevelopment and suburban growth (42%). Only eight percent (8%) supported suburban development on the outskirts of town.

The majority of respondents (55%) feel that there is adequate land available for the town’s future growth, compared to the nine percent (9%) who do not feel there is adequate available land.

RESIDENT SATISFACTION WITH THE TOWN AND TOWN SERVICES

Respondents were most satisfied with the town’s school facilities (8.3 average on a scale of 1-10), as well as the town’s “community appearance” (7.9 out of a possible 10). Respondents were least satisfied with the town’s cultural resources (2.5 out of a possible 10), recreational facilities (2.9) and recreational programs (3.3).

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Eighty three percent (83%) of respondents to the survey have resided in Adams for over 11 years. Seventy seven percent (77%) are property owners while seventeen percent are renters (17%). The majority of respondents (66%) have no children under age 18, while a quarter of them (25%) have 1 or 2 children. The majority of respondents (56%) were aged 40-65, twenty five percent (25%) were aged 18-39, and nineteen percent (19%) were over age 70. Respondents were somewhat evenly distributed economically with the largest number the twenty four percent (24%) who were from households earning between \$50-\$75,000 a year. The majority of respondents (55%) were full time workers, while the next largest group was unemployed/retired (29%).

Open Space and Recreation Survey Results

Town of Adams, MA

July, 2002

In June of 2002, the Town of Adams randomly selected approximately 600 residents to participate in a survey to assess how community residents feel about Town parks and recreation opportunities. Of the 600 surveys mailed, exactly 200 were returned and tabulated. The results are presented in this report.

1 How would you rate the quality of life in Adams?

	Number	Percent of Responses
Good	96	48%
Average	47	24%
Excellent	39	20%
Poor	12	6%
Very Poor	3	2%

2 Which of the following would you use to describe Adams?

	Number	Percent of Responses
Safe	157	79%
Historic	108	54%
Family-oriented	105	53%
Rural	92	46%
Attractive	77	39%
In decline	72	36%
Stable	56	28%
Improving	54	27%
Convenient	44	22%
Fun	14	7%
Divided	14	7%
Cultural	12	6%
Diverse	9	5%
Urban	3	2%
Vacation-oriented	3	2%

3 What do you see as the advantages or disadvantages of living in Adams?

	Advantage	% Advantage	Disadvantage	% Disadvantage
Rural Nature and Open Spaces	160	80%	39	20%
Neighborhoods	151	76%	48	24%
School System	139	70%	60	30%
Cost of living	138	69%	61	31%
Location Within the County	115	58%	84	42%
Historical and Cultural Amenities	109	55%	90	45%
Local Tax Rates	99	50%	100	50%
Parks and recreational Facilities	91	46%	108	54%

Availability of Services	62	31%	124	62%
Downtown	49	25%	133	67%
Job Opportunities	1	1%	198	99%

Other than what you listed above as advantages, is there any one specific reason why you decided to live in Adams, or why you enjoy living in Adams?

	Number	Percent
Family Roots in Town	54	27%
Safety	17	9%
Small-Town Feel	15	8%
Natural Beauty	14	7%
Quiet	11	6%
The People	9	5%
Family-Friendliness	9	5%
Cleanliness	5	3%
Schools	4	2%
Community	4	2%
Affordability	4	2%
Low Crime	3	2%

5 Do you identify yourself as part of a certain neighborhood in Adams?

Yes	112	56%
No	78	39%

6 Where do most of your recreation/exercise activities take place?

	Number	Percent
Home	103	52%
Out of Town	93	47%
Neighborhood	48	24%
Local Park	26	13%
School	25	13%
State Park	22	11%
Church	18	9%
Town Facility	9	5%

7 Which Recreational activities do you or members of your household participate in Adams?

walking and running	158	79%
rest / relaxation	87	44%
bicycling	61	31%
fishing	55	28%
Hiking	55	28%
movies and concerts	54	27%
swimming	49	25%
picnicking	43	22%
golf	41	21%

art and historic	38	19%
basketball	34	17%
soccer	34	17%
clubs and garden	32	16%
camping	27	14%
baseball	26	13%
birdwatching	26	13%
dancing	25	13%
xc skiing	25	13%
hunting and shooting sports	24	12%
other	21	11%
snowmobiling	17	9%
aerobics and yoga	14	7%
snowshoeing	14	7%
football	12	6%
in line skating	11	6%
downhill skiing	10	5%
tennis	8	4%
horseback riding	7	4%
ice skating	7	4%
skateboarding	7	4%

8 Are there any recreational activities that you or members of your family pursue outside of the town of Adams?

Yes	141	71%
No	50	25%

9 What activities are done outside of Town?

Cinema/theater	36	27%
Swimming	27	20%
Fitness	17	13%
Skiing	17	13%
Biking	15	11%
camping	14	11%
fishing	13	10%
dining	12	9%
golf	12	9%
museums	12	9%
shopping	12	9%
boating	11	8%
Dancing	9	7%
concerts	8	6%
skating	8	6%

10 Are existing outdoor recreation programs/activities adequate for _____?

The responses to this question are presented along with a scale to help interpret the data. The left column shows the total results for Children, Teens, Adults, Elderly, and Disabled on a weighted scale of 0 to 10 - if everyone were to answer 'no', the value would be 0, and if everyone were to answer 'yes' the value would be 10. This method shows that residents feel outdoor recreational opportunities are most adequate for Children and Elderly, and least adequate for Adults, Teens, and Disabled.

	Score 0-10		Number	Percent
Children	6.3	Yes	58	29%
		Somewhat	58	29%
		No	40	20%
		Don't Know	24	12%
Teens	4.3	Yes	21	11%
		Somewhat	52	26%
		No	73	37%
		Don't Know	32	16%
Adults	4.1	Yes	26	13%
		Somewhat	51	25%
		No	81	41%
		Don't Know	14	7%
Elderly	5.3	Yes	40	20%
		Somewhat	41	20%
		No	50	25%
		Don't Know	46	23%
Disabled	4.2	Yes	21	11%
		Somewhat	16	8%
		No	56	28%
		Don't Know	76	38%

11 Are existing indoor recreation programs/activities adequate for _____?

The responses to this question are presented along with a scale to help interpret the data. The left column shows the total results for Children, Teens, Adults, Elderly, and Disabled on a weighted scale of 0 to 10 - if everyone were to answer 'no', the value would be 0, and if everyone were to answer 'yes' the value would be 10. This method shows that residents feel outdoor recreational opportunities are most adequate for Children and Elderly, and least adequate for Adults, Teens, and Disabled.

	Score 0-10		Total Number	Percent of Surveys
Children	5.5	Yes	36	18%
		Somewhat	60	30%
		No	48	24%
		Don't Know	36	18%
Teens	3.9	Yes	13	7%
		Somewhat	46	23%
		No	74	37%
		Don't Know	39	20%
Adults	3.7	Yes	14	7%
		Somewhat	48	24%

		No	82	41%
		Don't Know	26	13%
Elderly	5.5	Yes	38	19%
		Somewhat	38	19%
		No	41	21%
		Don't Know	60	30%
Disabled	4.5	Yes	20	10%
		Somewhat	19	9%
		No	47	24%
		Don't Know	85	43%

12 What do you view as the greatest inadequacy in Town Recreational Programs?

	Number	Percent of Surveys
Indoor recreational facilities for youth	71	36%
Number of parks	34	17%
Facilities within existing parks	32	16%
Parks and recreation facilities are adequate	25	13%
Facilities for the elderly or disabled	23	12%
Location of parks and or access to parks	12	6%
Maintenance	10	5%
Other - Not Enough teen programming	6	3%
Other - Nothing of interest available	3	1.5%

13 Have you been to one of Adams' parks in the past year?

Yes	131	66%
No	57	29%

14 Which Parks/Facilities have you been to in the last year?

Greylock Glen	34	26%
Russell	30	23%
Valley St	24	18%
Wacky World	18	14%
Reid Field	15	11%
Common	13	10%
Bowe	5	4%

15 How do you get to the park?

Car	125	63%
Walk	77	39%
Bike	17	9%
Bus	2	1%
Other	0	0%

16 Is it possible to walk or bike to the park if you wanted?

Yes	108	54%
-----	-----	-----

No	28	14%
Too far	17	9%
Unsafe	4	2%

17 What attracts you to the parks you go to?

Location/convenience	57	29%
Sports facilities	50	25%
Walking/Biking trails	41	21%
Sitting/relaxation	41	21%
Child play area	40	20%
Other - Spectating	9	5%
Other Natural beauty	5	3%

18 Is there anything that keeps you from the parks?

Nothing interesting available	20	10%
No Time	8	4%
Poor conditions	4	2%

19 What Changes/Improvements to the Town's parks would make you visit them more often?

Toilets / facilities	12	6%
Swimming areas	12	6%
More activities	8	4%
Better Maintenance/cleanliness	8	4%
More/Better equipment	8	4%
Better seating areas	6	3%
Supervision/safety/policing	6	3%
Better Accessibility	6	3%

20 What facilities would you like to see included at the park most convenient to you to make it more attractive to visit?

Picnic Area	95	48%
Swimming Pool	67	34%
Nature Trail	63	32%
Seating Area	58	29%
Child Play Area	42	21%
Basketball Courts	24	12%
Tennis Courts	22	11%
Baseball field	13	7%
Other	13	7%
Soccer Field	12	6%
Other		
walking track		3
skating		2

21 What recreational activities/facilities would you like to see developed and/or expanded in Adams?

movie theater	92	46%	Other Ideas
Bike Trails	73	37%	Health Spa

Outdoor pool	73	37%	paintball
concert facilities	72	36%	youth center
picnic/BBQ areas	67	34%	historical programs
Hiking/Ski trails	62	31%	snowmobile
			real commercial center
indoor pool	53	27%	community center w/ recreational facilities similar to dalton
Playgrounds	48	24%	
Ice skating	45	23%	glen development
indoor gym	45	23%	access to Mt. Greylock-tram/gondola
access to Hoosic river	39	20%	rodeo area for bikes
golf	35	18%	snowmobile trails
Mountain Bike trails	28	14%	
basketball cts	25	13%	
drama facilities	21	11%	
Yoga;dance	20	10%	
Tennis Cts	18	9%	
Baseball/softball	14	7%	
soccer field	13	7%	
other1	11	6%	
Volleyball	10	5%	
other2	1	1%	

22 Would you favor a small increase (1-3%) in property taxes to construct a community recreation center or youth center?

Yes	75	38%
No	56	28%
Not Sure	43	22%
No Opinion	14	7%

23 Do you think that the Town should have more areas designed for open space?

yes	67	34%
no	51	26%
not sure	42	21%
no opinion	21	11%

If so, check any of the following you would do to accomplish this:

encourage additional state-owned land	32	48%
no opinion	28	42%
town has too much open space already	17	25%
donate money to help buy land	12	18%
other ideas	12	18%
sell or contribute a "conservation restriction"	6	9%
contribute land to town	5	7%

sell some land to town at market price	4	6%
sell land to town at bargain price	4	6%

24 Would you support a Town effort to protect farms, forests, and other scenic resources?

yes	115	58%
not sure	30	15%
no	29	15%
no opinion	9	5%

25 Would you favor a small (3%) increase in property taxes to promote conservation of unprotected open space in Adams?

no	95	48%
not sure	42	21%
yes	37	19%
no opinion	18	9%

26 Please rank the top five of the following conservation issues in order of their importance to you:

	Average Priority (1 = Highest Priority)
Protecting drinking water supplies	2.3
Protecting water quality of streams	2.6
Preserving the beauty of landscape	2.8
Making Hoosic more accessible	3.0
Protecting wildlife habitat	3.1
Buying development rights to farmland	3.3
Preserving ridgeline views	3.3
Controlling erosion	3.5
Preserving other open spaces	3.6
Preserving historic buildings	3.7

Other Priority Conservation Issues Mentioned

Development / Non Development of the Glen
Planting trees along roadway
Remove run down tenements and houses
WB Plunkett hospital

27 How do you feel about the current level of new residential housing being developed?

level is OK	65	33%
more residential growth	51	26%
less residential growth	35	18%
volume OK, would like mixed development	31	16%

28 Would you prefer to see new growth as:

redevelopment in the existing downtown	84	42%
a mixture of redevelopment and suburban growth	84	42%
suburban-style development in the outskirts	15	8%
no development at all	11	6%

29 Do you believe there is adequate available land for the Town's future growth and development?

yes	110	55%
not sure	56	28%
no	18	9%
no opinion	5	3%

30 Please Indicate your level of satisfaction with the following conditions in Town:

Putting the data on a scale of 1-10, where great = 10, satisfactory = 5 and poor = 0, we can compare the levels of satisfaction with the following conditions in town.

Condition	Average Score (from a scale of 1-10)	
school facilities	8.3	
community appearance	7.9	
school programs	5.3	
municipal government services	5.3	
accessibility of parks	5.2	
quality/condition of parks	4.8	
downtown appearance	4.3	
conservation efforts	4.3	
recreational programs	3.3	
recreational facilities	2.9	
cultural resources	2.5	

31 How long have you lived in Adams

11+ years	166	83%
2-5 years	13	7%
6-10 years	13	7%
less than 2 years	6	3%

32 Are you a:

Property Owner	154	77%
Renter	36	18%

33 How many children under the age of 18 live in your household?

0	131	66%
1-2	49	25%
3-4	13	7%
5+	0	0%

34 How old are you?

under 18	0	0
----------	---	---

18-39	48	24%
40-69	112	56%
70+	37	19%

35 Please indicate your total (gross) household income in 2001.

under 10,000	8	4%
10,000-24,999	28	14%
25,000-34,999	30	15%
35,000-49,999	28	14%
50,000-74,999	45	23%
over 75,000	24	12%

36 What is your employment status?

full-time	109	55%
unemployed / retired	57	29%
part-time	23	12%
student	10	5%

ADAMS 1997 SURVEY RESULTS

(Results Include Open Space and Recreation Related Questions Only)

Question # 3. In your opinion, what are the top 3 scenic assets of Adams?

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|
| 1. | Mount Greylock | 93 |
| 2. | The Glen | 38 |
| 3. | Downtown/Historic | 13 |
| 4. | Town Common | 12 |
| 5. | Farm land/Meadows | 9 |
| 6. | Greylock Tower | 9 |

Other responses included: Valley views, Quaker House, High bridge, East Road, Cemeteries, Belview Falls, McKinley Square, Town Parks, and Victorian homes.

Question # 4. Of the recreation areas in Adams which do you use most frequently?
(Respondents could circle more than one choice.)

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|----|-----|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | Mount Greylock | 67 | 11. | None | 7 |
| 2. | Town Common | 51 | 12. | Sierra Street Field | 5 |
| 3. | Valley Street Field | 36 | 13. | Greylock Glen | 5 |
| 4. | Renfrew Field | 22 | 14. | Hoosic Valley HS | 3 |
| 5. | Russell Field | 20 | 15. | Forest Park Country Club | 2 |
| 6. | Reid Field | 12 | 16. | Senior Community Center | 1 |
| 7. | Bowe Field | 12 | 17. | McDonald's | 1 |
| 8. | Memorial Park | 12 | 18. | Hoosic River Levee | 1 |
| 9. | Quality Playground | 12 | 19. | Joe's House | 1 |
| 10. | Wacky World | 8 | | | |

Question # 5. What types of exercise and recreational activities do you and your family participate in locally? (Respondents could circle more than one choice.)

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|-----|-----|------------------|----|
| 1. | Hiking / Walking | 115 | 13. | Rollerblading | 27 |
| 2. | Gardening | 68 | 14. | Snowmobiling | 27 |
| 3. | Biking | 63 | 15. | Antiquing | 26 |
| 4. | Fishing | 58 | 16. | Historic Touring | 25 |
| 5. | Swimming | 56 | 17. | Football | 24 |
| 6. | Basketball | 53 | 18. | Boating | 22 |
| 7. | Golf | 50 | 19. | Downhill Skiing | 14 |
| 8. | Baseball /Softball | 43 | 20. | Tennis | 12 |
| 9. | Soccer | 38 | 21. | Running | 3 |
| 10. | Hunting | 35 | 22. | Hockey | 2 |
| 11. | Cross Country Skiing | 33 | 23. | Snowshoe | 1 |
| 12. | Skating | 28 | 24. | Motorcycling | 1 |

Question # 6. What facilities (both land and buildings) are needed in Adams for exercise and recreational activities. (Respondents could give more than one answer.)

- | | | | | | |
|----|----------------------|----|-----|-------------------|---|
| 1. | Bike / Walking Trail | 23 | 11. | Recreation Center | 2 |
| 2. | Youth Club / Center | 14 | 12. | Senior Trails | 1 |

3.	Swimming Area / Pool	13	13.	Zoo	1
4.	Gym / Health	12	14.	Bowling	1
5.	Recreation / Soccer Fields	11	15.	Racquet Ball	1
6.	Skating / Roller Rink	8	16.	River Access	1
7.	Basketball Facilities	5	17.	Strip Bar	1
8.	Picnic Areas	4	18.	Casino	1
9.	Theater / Music Hall	4	19.	Taco Bell	1
10.	Camping	4	20.	Tennis Courts	1

Question #7. What types of future development would you like to see in Adams?
(Respondents could circle more than one choice.)

1. Industrial 70
2. Commercial 42
3. Residential 17
4. All Three (of above) 8

Other responses include: Recreation, Tourism, Nature/ Outdoors, Children, Casino, and Roads.

Question # 8. What are the most important uses of undeveloped land in Adams.
(Respondents could circle more than one choice.)

1. Recreation 82
2. Wildlife Habitat 68
3. Conservation 44
4. Attract future development 44
5. Preserve rural character 43

Other responses include: Industry and Agriculture.

Question #17. What category best describes your occupation?
(Respondents were asked to circle only one choice unless they were retired. If they were retired they were asked to circle their former occupation.)

1. Business/ Professional 49
2. Retired 21
3. Service 16
4. Manufacturing 11
5. Government 11
6. Full time student 9
7. Construction 8
8. Homemaker 7
9. Wholesale/ Retail 7
10. Unemployed 4
11. Agriculture 3

Other Responses include: Foster Home, Health/ Fitness, Disabled, EMT, Daycare, Recipe Taster, and Owning own Business.

Question # 19. What is your number one concern/priority for Adams' future?

1. Youth opportunities 22
2. Jobs 21

3.	Industry / Development	13
4.	Develop Greylock	9
5.	Preservation of New England Character	8
6.	Lower crime / Safe environment	6
7.	Small Town Atmosphere	6
8.	Conservation / Ecological Preservation	5
9.	Survival of the Town	5
10.	Status Quo	5

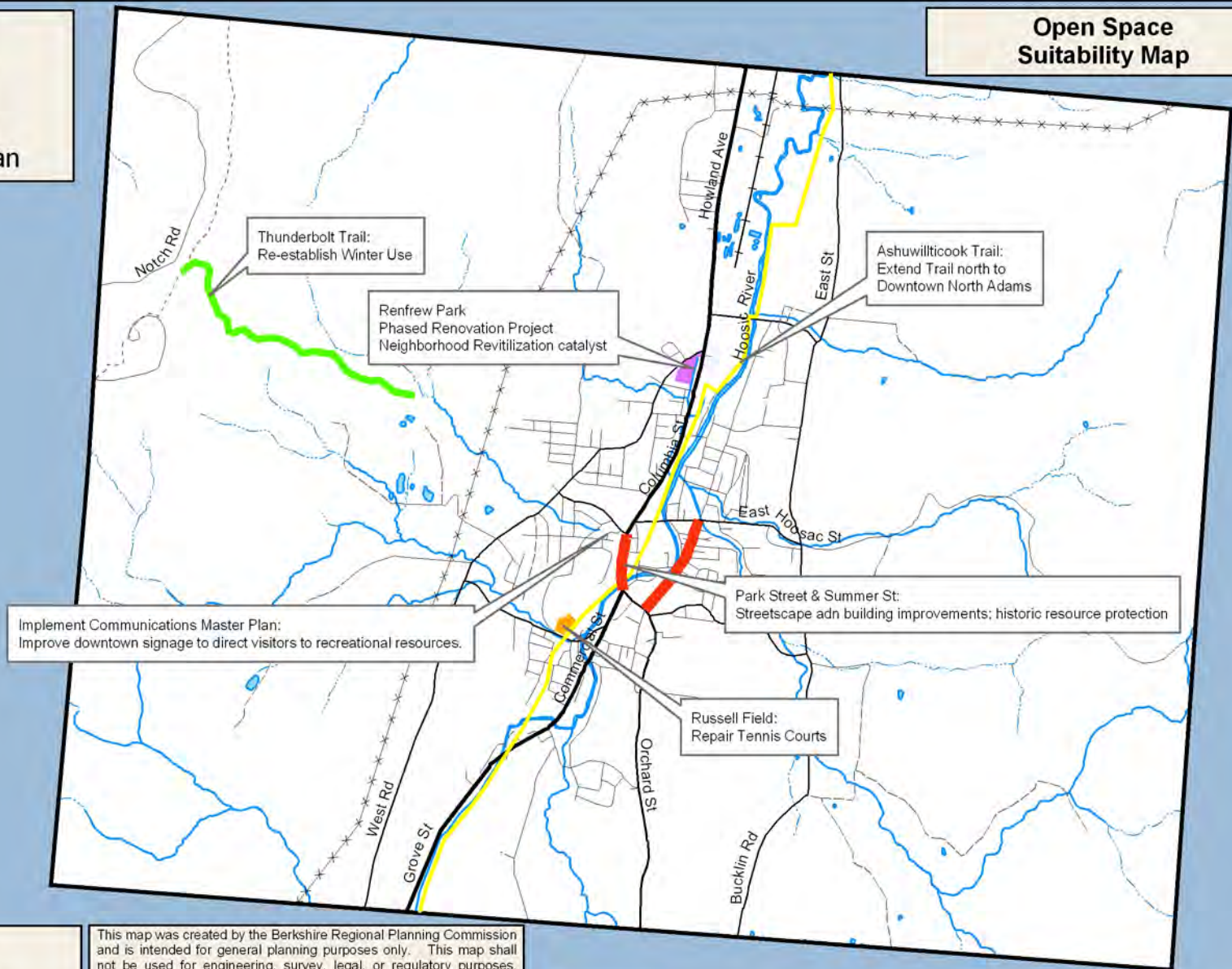
Other responses include: Education, Drugs, Using what we already have, Tourism, Concentrate on the Residents not the Tourists, Lower taxes, Economic stability, and Improve Downtown.

NOTES

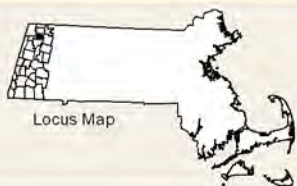
Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

Open Space Suitability Map

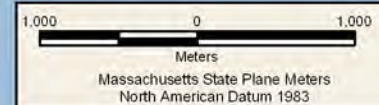


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June 22, 2004

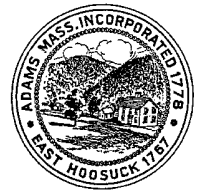


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This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



Housing



Introduction to Housing Element



The housing element focuses on developing a comprehensive housing strategy for Adams. The housing element includes a detailed inventory of housing supply, anticipated needs and demand and analysis of affordability. This element provides documentation and analysis of a wide range of housing data and provides a number of recommended local actions to promote affordable housing opportunities in the Town of Adams. The data presented includes discussion of local and regional demographics, economic issues such as assessed values, market values and property taxes, housing tenure, housing age and condition, vacancy rates, rental housing availability, rental costs and other relevant information.

Town of Adams Community Housing Strategy

Current Housing Stock

The Town of Adams is a rural community of 8,809 residents (3,992 households) located in northern Berkshire County. Adams is characterized by a distinct town center, a mix of residential and industrial development north and south of this center, less dense residential development rising into the hillsides to the east and west, and finally, protected farmland and forestland along the higher elevations. Residential development spreads east and west, decreasing in density as the terrain becomes progressively steeper. Of the Town's 4,362 housing units, 2,102 (48%) are single-family homes. Housing is relatively dense in and around the downtown area, consisting of a mix of single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family apartment buildings. There are also 68 mobile homes located on individual lots throughout the community.

The total number of housing units in Adams has remained virtually steady from 1990 to 2000, increasing by only six (6) units, while the population decreased 6.73% from 9,445 to 8,809 (see Table 1). A little more than half of Adams' housing units are owner-occupied (55.3%), while 36.2% are rental units. The 2000 Census data show the number of rental units in Adams decreasing by 3.5% from 1990 to 2000, and the number of owner-occupied housing units decreasing by 1.3% while the number of vacant units, both homeowner and rental, increased during the same period.

Over the past six years, Adams has seen a steady, albeit modest, issuance of new residential building permits each year (see Table 2). An average of eight (8) building permits were issued annually from 1997 to 2002. The last six years has also seen steady increases in the average value of new construction, from \$89,045 in 1997 to \$138,960 in 2002. Notably, the value of all houses built during this period is significantly below the \$240,260 threshold identified as the affordable purchase price for new housing in Adams (MA DHCD, *Instructions for Completion of FY2003 Request for E.O 418 Housing Certification*).

Table 1: Housing Occupancy

	2000	1990	% Change 1990-2000
Seasonal	10 (0.2%)	18 (0.4%)	-45.0%
Owner-Occupied	2,414 (55.3%)	2,446 (56.2%)	-1.3%
Rental	1,578 (36.2%)	1,635 (37.5%)	-3.5%
Vacant Units*	360 (8.3%)	257 (5.9%)	+40.1%
Total Housing Stock	4,362	4,356	+0.14%
% Vacant Year-Round			
Homeowner Units	1.5%	1.7%	-11.8%
% Vacant Year-Round			
Rental Units	9.4%	7.3%	+28.8%

*Vacant Units Not Including Seasonal Units

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Table 2: Building Permits Issued for Construction of New Single Family Residences 1997-2002

Year	# of Permits Issued	AVG Value
1997	7	\$89,045
1998	12	\$103,685
1999	12	\$112,236
2000	6	\$120,000
2001	7	\$120,000

Constraints to Development

Forty percent 40% (5,800 acres) of the land area in Adams is designated as permanently protected open space. Approximately 1,921 acres or 13% of the Town is already developed, and only 2,913 acres or 20% of the total area of Adams is potentially developable.² Several physical factors, such as the steepness of remaining developable land, severely limit future development in Adams. Eighty five percent (85%) of the developable land, 2,479 acres, is zoned for residential use.

Given the trend of steady population decline and a very moderate rate of residential development, new subdivisions requiring approval under the Subdivision Control Law have not been a significant factor in Adams. Similar to most municipalities within the Commonwealth, available road frontage within the Town is being developed first. As this buildable frontage is developed, interior parcels of land will need to be subdivided and new roads will have to be built to accommodate future residential growth. Many of the remaining large parcels in Town have physical limitations and are further constrained relative to the water supply distribution system. Despite their location proximate to public utilities and within the Adams Fire District, the present system cannot maintain adequate pressures to provide reliable service to many areas of higher elevations on the east and west sides of Town. Since these are essentially the only areas available for new development, future development costs will be higher. It will be critical for the Town to examine ways to overcome these constraints so as not to prohibit new residential development.

Lands within the Town are divided into ten primary zoning districts, four of which are residential. The R-1, R-2, R-3, and R-4 residential zones all allow for single-family dwellings by right. Two-family development is allowed by right in the R-4 district and by special permit in the other districts. Minimum lot size requirements vary from 10,000 square feet in the R-4 district to one acre in the R-1 District. In addition to the ten primary zoning districts, Adams has a Floodplain District, which requires a special permit for development in flood prone areas.

Declining economic conditions in Adams continue to be an important reason for limited future development, particularly within the Downtown area. Over half of the structures in Downtown Adams are residential and are physically deteriorating (see Downtown Building Inventory, September 2002). Building owners and landlords, however, are reluctant to invest in rehabilitation as present market conditions make it difficult to justify the costs associated with doing so. This has resulted in seriously deferred maintenance of these structures and has possibly contributed to the increase in rental unit vacancies and decrease in overall rental units that the Town has seen from 1990 to 2000.

Population and Income

The 2000 Census shows the population of Adams continuing to decline. The Town has been losing population steadily since 1960 – on the average an 8% decline every 10 years. The total population loss from 1960 to 2000 was 28.9%, from 12,391 residents in 1960 to 8,809 in 2000. In 2000, twenty-nine percent (29%) or 2,560 residents of the Town were under age 25, and twenty percent (20.4%) or 1,800 of the Town's residents were over 65.

Median household income in 2000 in Adams is \$32,161, equal to only 64% of the state median of \$50,502 and considerably lower than the median Berkshire County household income of \$39,047. Unemployment in Town is significantly higher at 9.1% than the state rate of 5.3% (MA DUA; October 2003). The total number of jobs in Adams in 2001 was 2,191 with an average annual wage of \$29,317, an increase of 23.6% from \$22,400 in 1990. The number of middle-income residents, earning from 80-150% of the Town median, has decreased from 34% to 31% from 1990 to 2000. Over half (52.4%) of the Town's residents are considered low- and moderate-income persons. One hundred seventy-one (171) of the Town's 2,436 families sampled in the 2000 Census (7%) were below the poverty level as defined in 2000.

Local Housing Needs

Housing rehabilitation continues to be the most critical housing need in Adams to enable the Town to meet its main affordable housing objective (no net loss of affordable units). Given the age and affordability of its existing housing stock and the Town's emphasis on preservation and community reinvestment, aggressive implementation of the Adams Housing Rehabilitation Program has been a central focus of Adams' housing policy to ensure there is no net loss of affordable housing units. Other housing implementation activities are directed at addressing housing market demand inhibitors identified in the Housing Market Study (1997). Efforts include initiating a downtown revitalization program that has a strong focus on enhancing the downtown, better code enforcement, especially with reference to multi-family structures, reinvestment in the Town's existing, older neighborhoods, and the creation of middle- to upper-end housing to ensure Adams becomes a balanced community. More recent planning studies continue to focus on the need to rehabilitate the Town's older housing stock (58.8% of all residential structures in Adams were built prior to 1940) to preserve affordable housing opportunity, and to maintain the aesthetic character of the community. The *Adams Downtown Development Plan* (July 2003) emphasizes the importance of downtown as a neighborhood and the redevelopment of downtown as essential to the Town's efforts to diversify the housing stock and expand housing options for individuals and families across a broad range of incomes. The Plan identifies mill buildings in and around downtown for reuse as new residential. The Plan also recommends increasing the supply of housing by creating new units above existing storefronts and adding infill housing throughout the downtown area on currently underutilized commercial and vacant lots. The Plan further demonstrates that public funds are necessary to close the significant gap between current rents and those needed to support additional market-rate housing construction in Adams.

Housing needs within Adams can be quite different from the needs of other communities in the County and the Commonwealth. Household growth in Adams has been static and the number of housing units has remained essentially the same for the last decade. From 1990 to 2000, the total number of occupied rental units in Adams decreased by 3.5% from 1,635 in 1990 to 1,578 in 2000, but the vacancy rate for year-round rental units rose from 7.3% to 9.5%. This demonstrates a relatively stable supply of rental housing within Adams, though this supply typically is older and in need of substantial renovations. The low rental rates in Adams contribute to the decline in property conditions, and if this trend is allowed to continue the Town will lose affordable units. In Adams there is the need and demand for high quality, market rate rental housing, as demonstrated by the demand for units at the Berkshire Mills property (there

is a waiting list for apartments). However, the rent levels currently being achieved in this property will only support \$50-60,000/unit of capital investment – this translates into \$50/sf of development costs, or less than half of what it would cost to build new multi-family housing. Absent sources of funds to close this gap, rents need to be roughly double current maximum levels to support new development.

Northern Berkshire County, especially neighboring North Adams, has traditionally had a large supply of rental housing, but recent high regional housing demand has prevented available houses and apartments from being on the market long. Adams has 341 housing units, or 7.8%, that qualify as affordable under Chapter 40B regulations. However, this percentage is expected to increase significantly when the Town provides DHCD's Local Initiative Program the number of units already rehabilitated under the Adams Housing Rehabilitation Program with long-term rental restrictions. There are eight families in Adams that are waiting to receive a Section 8 subsidy voucher.

There are similar needs relative to owner-occupied households within Adams. A household earning the median household income in Adams in 2002 of \$34,420 (2000 Census adjusted CPI) could afford to spend approximately \$105,000 on a home, while the average cost for the five single-family homes built in 2002 was \$138,860. However, 63% of the sixty-four homes sold in Adams in 2002 were affordable to median income households in Adams, while 41% of those sold in Adams in 2002 were affordable to a household earning up to \$27,536, which is considered moderate income (see Adams Housing Profile, Gap Analysis 2002). Moderate-income households represent 39% of total households in Adams. Similarly, low-income households represent 24% of total households in Adams, and 28% of the houses sold in 2002 were within the affordability range of low-income households. Based on these statistics, Adams has a range of available housing that is affordable to current households in Adams. If there is any gap, it is housing that is available to higher income households that is in short supply.

There is a particular need to maintain housing for elderly and disabled residents in Adams. The median household income for residents aged 75 and older (\$17,021) is considered low-income for Berkshire County. This age cohort is also the lowest median income level for any age group in Town. The rise in the number of older residents increased the Town's median age from 38.5 in 1990 to 41.3 in 2000, a level well above the statewide median age of 36.5. The growing number of older residents also increases the need to maintain housing for disabled and disabled elderly. Disabled residents comprise approximately 20% of the Town's residents (1,762 residents), or almost one out of every five persons. For residents over 65 years old, those with disabilities increase to almost 38%, or two out of every five persons. The higher ratio of disabilities and lower income levels for Adams's elderly residents demonstrates a strong need for funding assistance directed at enhancing the accessibility of housing for the Town's special needs residents.

Ongoing Efforts

Adams intends to continue its current efforts in developing housing opportunities to meet the needs of the community, and is taking several steps to implement an affordable housing strategy. The Town has some past experience with DHCD's Housing Development Support Program (HDSP), creating four new affordable housing units for first time homebuyers on Apremont Street. The project was completed in 2002. The recently adopted *Adams Downtown Development Plan* identifies several potential

opportunities to develop currently vacant or underutilized buildings as new housing. The Town sold the former Plunkett Hospital building for \$1 to a local developer to renovate the building into sixteen (16) new condominium housing units. The Town is carefully shepherding the project through the development review process because it is anticipated that the project will stimulate interest in additional vacant buildings that have a potential for reuse. The Town is currently working with three property owners on Park Street to renovate the upper floors of commercial structures for residential use. In all cases, the spaces have either been vacant for over 10-15 years or used marginally for offices. The Town is also working with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to obtain feasibility monies from EPA's Brownfields Program to evaluate the McDermid Graphic Arts building for possible reuse as housing. The building has been vacant for over two years and its location proximate to Downtown and along the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail enhances its desirability as an opportunity site for new housing.

The Town continues to aggressively implement the Adams Housing Rehabilitation Program (HRP). This program addresses the repair and rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income residential units that are both owner-occupied and investor-owned. Participation is allowed on a town-wide basis although the current emphasis of the program is focused on the Downtown. The Downtown target area represents much of the Town's older housing stock that is characterized by deficiencies, such as outdated electrical wiring, antiquated plumbing and heating systems, and chipping lead paint. The FY00 Adams HRP expended \$91,487 of public funds on nine housing units benefiting 17 low- and moderate-income residents. The FY01 HRP will expend \$340,837 rehabbing 20 housing units and benefiting over 37 low- and moderate-income residents. The Town's FY03 HRP will expend \$100,000 in public funds and benefit 25 low- and moderate-income residents. The Adams HRP addresses the various needs of rehabilitation in each unit. Typical improvements addressed under the program are dilapidated roofs, inadequate storm doors and windows, new plumbing and heating systems, interior flooring, asbestos removal, and lead abatement.

The Town currently participates in several MassHousing homeowner assistance programs, including the "Get the Lead Out Program," the "Home Improvement Loan Program," and the "Septic Repair Loan Program." In addition, the Town works with Berkshire Bank to administer MassHousing's "First Time Homebuyers Program." The Town works with both local lenders and nonprofit agencies to provide first time homebuyer education and counseling. The Town provides counseling to individuals and families on the goals of the various programs, the application process, homeownership, and other program components. Since 1997, Adams residents have received loans totaling \$774,000 through MassHousing's "First Time Homebuyer's Program" (source: MassHousing).

Housing Goals and Recommended Actions

Adams will continue efforts to support and promote the creation of additional housing opportunities to diversify the housing stock and broaden the range of housing options for current and potential residents in the Town. An average of 8 building permits were issued annually from 1997 to 2002, and all five new homes constructed in 2002 were considered affordable by EO418 guidelines. Based on previous construction trends and market values, the Town expects to realize five (5) affordable units per year in order to meet the needs of the community.

Adams has established the following objectives to meet the specific housing needs of the community while supporting regional efforts for affordable housing:

- Continue to support housing production for households across a broad range of incomes in areas identified by the Community Development Plan in order to establish a more diverse and balanced range of housing types across all income levels, including high-end housing to ensure a balanced community.
- Evaluate the feasibility of housing reuse in the McDermid Mill, the Old Stone Mill, Curtis Fine Papers, and other underutilized mill buildings in order to increase housing opportunities within walking distance to downtown and with access to the Hoosic River and Ashuwillticook Rail Trail.
- Target rehab assistance to multi-tenant and other downtown buildings to enhance the quality of Downtown as a neighborhood and to support downtown business development goals.
- Specifically target redevelopment of vacant or underutilized upper floors on Park Street, Summer Street and along the Route 8 Corridor in order to upgrade the quality of the Town's housing stock.
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of neighborhood conditions: evaluate the condition of the housing stock, potential for infill development, adequacy of public facilities and open space, and infrastructure needs on a neighborhood basis. Prepare a neighborhood-based plan for housing as an element of the Town's anticipated Master Plan update.
- Work to ensure that the Renfrew Park renovation effort acts as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization.
- Enhance the accessibility of existing housing to address the needs of the Town's elderly and disabled elderly residents.
- Work closely with the owners of remaining large parcels to ensure future residential development expands housing options within Adams and is of high quality.
- Work with the Adams Fire District to address inadequacies in the water supply distribution system ensuring appropriate areas for new residential development will be served by public utilities.
- Support infill development as identified in the *Adams Downtown Development Plan*.
- Continue the Town's housing rehabilitation efforts to maintain and preserve its existing housing stock through DHCD and MassHousing programs.

Town of Adams Community Development Plan

-  Target redevelopment of vacant/underutilized upper floors on Park St, Summer St and along the Route 8 corridor in order to upgrade the quality of the towns housing stock
-  Evaluate the feasibility of housing reuse in the McDermid Mill, the Old Stone Mill, Curtis Fine Papers, and other underutilized mill buildings
-  Target rehab assistance to multi-tenant and other downtown buildings to enhance the quality of Downtown as a neighborhood.
- Convert under-utilized commercial space to affordable rental housing units in the downtown
- Support infill development as identified in the Adams Downtown Development Plan
-  Preserve and invest in existing neighborhoods
-  Water distribution improvements for residential expansion area within urban service boundary.

/cdp/adm/projects/Housing_suit.mxd
June 28, 2004



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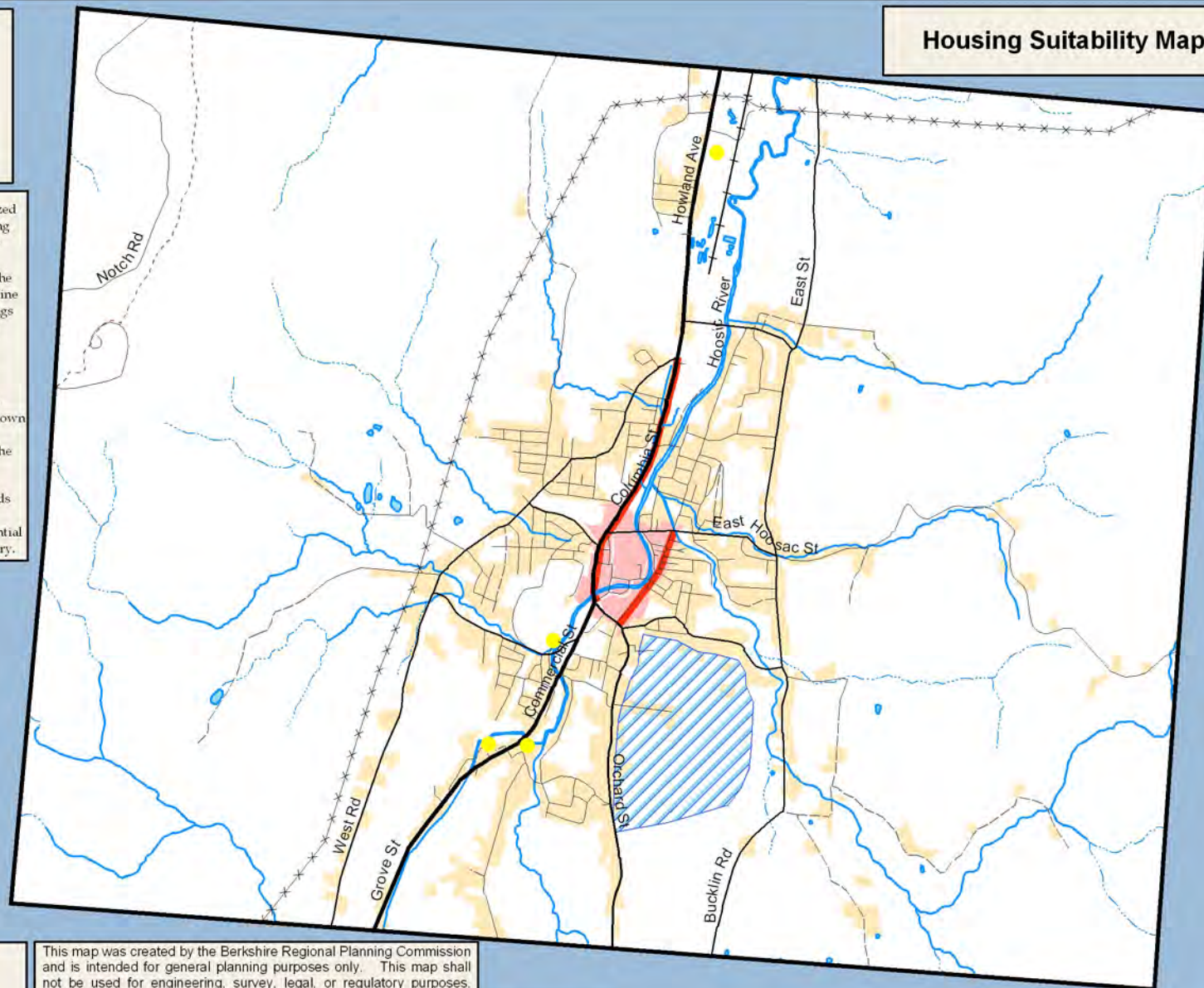
This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction



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Housing Suitability Map



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



Economic Development



Introduction to the Economic Development Element



The economic development element of the CDP focuses on development along part of the Route 8 Corridor in Adams. The study considers areas suitable for economic development based on land use, development constraints, market conditions and infrastructure concerns. Extensive land use data incorporating information on individual parcels in the corridor has been compiled and analyzed as part of this study. Similarly, data on existing traffic conditions was gathered and considered as part of analysis.

Northern Route 8 Corridor Study

Town of Adams

I. BACKGROUND

Economic Background

The Town of Adams' economic engine has historically been driven by industry. The power of the river was harnessed to develop early industry in the town. The Adams industrial economy was initially driven by textile and paper mills and mining operations. The Town's manufacturing base has declined dramatically over the last several decades, as has been typical of the entire Berkshire region. Though a fairly significant amount of manufacturing still occurs in Adams, the Town appears to be transitioning to a primarily service-based economy.

The Town has had an economic diversification strategy in place for more than a decade. This involves working to maintain a manufacturing component, while diversifying the local economy by developing a tourism sector, which is strong in much of Berkshire County, and attracting and developing "new economy" businesses as well. The Town is well positioned to implement these strategies as it has an attractive downtown and is home to an abundance of significant natural, historical and recreational assets such as Mount Greylock State Reservation, the Hoosic River, a number of important historic sites and buildings and the recently extended Ashuwillticook Rail Trail which extends from downtown Adams southward through Cheshire and Lanesborough.

Adams also has an aggressive downtown revitalization program underway that is showing signs of success. Downtown efforts have included development of the *Adams Downtown Development Plan*, a mill conversion to high-quality housing, streetscaping, storefront façade improvements, and new business start-ups. Most recently the Town became home to the new Discover the Berkshires – Adams Visitor Center, a multi-million dollar, state-of-the-art visitors services center which also serves as the new headquarters of the Berkshire Visitors Bureau. A priority economic development strategy is to continue revitalization and development efforts in the Downtown, as discussed fully in the *Adams Downtown Revitalization Plan*.

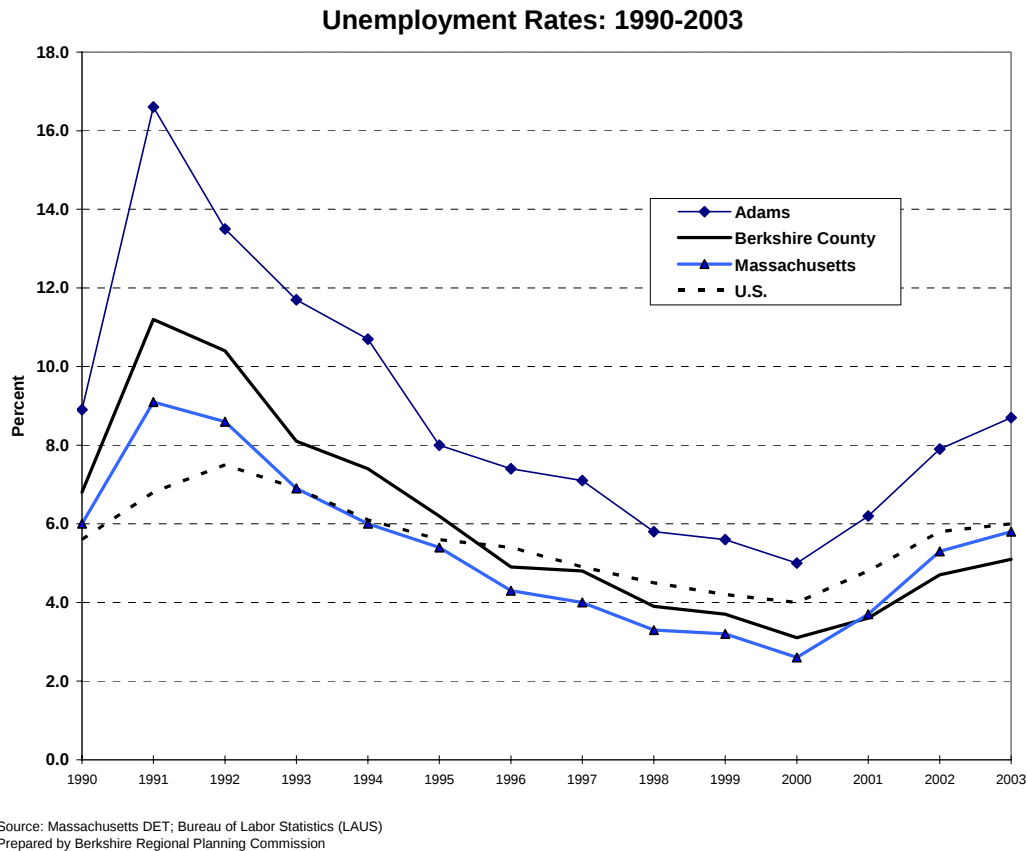
Another priority economic development priority is to see the master plan for Greylock Glen come to reality. This project has been mired in controversy for a number of years and various development projects have failed to move forward. The current amended master plan approved by the Department of Conservation and Recreation earlier this year calls for a large portion of the land in the Glen to be protected and utilized only for passive recreation while allowing a small amount of concentrated development in the area immediately adjacent to existing developed areas.

Economic Conditions

The Town has 195 employers that employ 2,191 people locally (Mass Stats- MA Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA)). According to the most recent US Census information, Massachusetts ranks 3rd in terms of highest median income as compared to other states. However, Adams ranked 342 of 351 communities in the state for median household income (\$32,161) and median family income (\$40,559) (Census 2000). The largest employment sectors in Adams are retail/wholesale trade (25%), manufacturing (22.7%), government (19%), and services (14.1%) (DUA). The manufacturing sector has fallen from the largest employment sector in 1985 when it employed 29% of the entire work force.

Unemployment rates in Adams are consistently and significantly higher than the rates for the nation, the state and Berkshire County as a whole (see chart below). Even with the recent national trends of relatively low unemployment and despite the ongoing efforts to diversify the local economy, there has been a steady increase in the Town's annual unemployment rate for the last four consecutive years. The unemployment rate in Adams has risen steadily each year after a recent historic low of 5% in 2000, averaging 8.7% in 2003 (it was actually over 9% in December 2003). The trend appears to be continuing as the average unemployment rates for the first quarter of CY 2004 have spiked to nearly 10%

(DUA).



The Town's labor force (people who live in town but do not necessarily work there) is 4,073 as of May 2004 (DUA). It is useful to have a more detailed examination of the local workforce (people actually working in town, including those who may live elsewhere) and occupational data indicating which industries provide the most jobs locally. "Industries" are based on Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes and are more specific than the broader employment "sector" information provided above. According to the latest available DUA unsuppressed data (2001), restaurants and bars are the largest "industry" in Adams, employing 218 people (12% of the entire workforce). The two industries that provide the second most employment locally are "special trade contractors" and "chemical and allied products," which each employ 202 persons (each slightly over 11% percent of total workforce). The grocery store industry provides the third highest level of local employment, about 133 jobs or 7.4% of the total workforce.

The data indicates that despite strong efforts to revitalize the local economy, the Town still faces a number of economic challenges. These challenges include high unemployment, comparatively low household and family incomes, a local economy that is becoming increasingly skewed toward lower paying "service" sector jobs, a diminishing manufacturing sector that typically provided higher

paying jobs, and an economy that has consistently lagged behind the State and the region. The northern Berkshire region still contains a concentration of the lowest income levels in the Commonwealth and high unemployment rates (11.3% in Adams compared to 6.2% statewide; DUA, January 2004), which would be significantly worse if not for the continued out-migration of working families in the intervening years. Since 1985, well over a thousand residents have been forced to leave Adams due to the lack of economic opportunity. Due to this out-migration, the Town's population has become increasingly low income and elderly (52.4% low/moderate income (2000 Census), as compared to 44.5% in 1990) and its educational attainment significantly lags the region's, much less the state's. Demographically Adams is no longer a sustainable community. All areas within Town suffer from a lack of demand and investment, impacting downtown and other businesses and properties, both residential and commercial. Just within the past year, three of the Town's remaining manufacturers have closed their doors (McDermid Graphics, Old Stone Mill, and Curtis Fine Papers) eliminating an additional 203 quality jobs and leaving vacant three more obsolete and contaminated mill buildings in our community. A fourth manufacturer, Catamount Wood Pellet Co., left Adams in the preceding year, with the loss of additional jobs.

This study is intended to identify and analyze additional economic development opportunities for the Town of Adams in order to stimulate business expansion, development and the creation of quality employment opportunities. A study was completed of the Downtown area in 2003. An additional area that appears to have significant development potential is the Route 8 corridor linking Adams and North Adams. The Route 8 Corridor contains a significant number of businesses, but many of the sites appear to be underutilized, ownership is fragmented with many small parcels and the overall appearance of the corridor is not attractive for new businesses. This study will focus on analyzing potential economic opportunities, based on ownership and environmental constraints in that targeted area.

Study Area- Route 8 Corridor

The Town has conducted two previous studies that focused on portions of the Route 8 corridor. The first study, the *Adams Downtown Development Plan* concentrated on planning and improvements for the downtown area. The second study, *Gateway Revitalization Plan for the Route 8 Corridor* focused primarily on revitalization plans for a 2 to 3 block segment of the most densely developed section of the corridor just north of the downtown area. The *Gateway Revitalization Plan* essentially concentrated on the area of Route 8 (known locally as Columbia Street) roughly from Hoosac Street north to the intersection with Friend Street. The primary study area for the purposes of this economic development element will be the final leg of the corridor that extends north from Friend Street to the Adams/North Adams line and focuses primarily on the parcels that directly front the Route 8 corridor. It should be noted that the

transportation element of this study, focuses on the traffic conditions and impacts of development along the Route 8 corridor, however the transportation element study area includes the entire area from Hoosac Street to the border with North Adams.

Route 8 is the major north-south transportation route in both Adams and North Adams. The Route 8 transportation corridor appears to have development potential for projects of local and regional significance, although there are significant obstacles including fragmented ownership, a number of small parcels with existing, albeit perhaps unattractive or functionally obsolete, uses on most of them, and some environmental constraints. Past regional studies have shown portions of the corridor to be one of the highest priority areas for potential business park or manufacturing use in the Berkshires. Downtown revitalization efforts and the Discover the Berkshires - Adams Visitors Center are already successful projects that serve as anchors for future development projects in the other parts of the corridor area. The recent sale and potential redevelopment of the North Adams Plaza site, and the future development of the Gravel Pit Site in North Adams can also serve as catalysts for economic growth and opportunity within the corridor. These and other projects will not only directly impact growth on those particular sites, but are likely to have broader impacts that will stimulate growth in adjacent areas of undeveloped and underutilized industrially and commercially zoned land. Any new development or redevelopment along the corridor, whether in Adams or North Adams, is likely to serve as a stimulus for growth in both communities.

The entire corridor area appears to be in period of transition and this allows the Town a unique opportunity to attempt to shape and manage the growth along this corridor in way that is suitable and compatible with the goals and vision of the Town as a whole. The impact of unmanaged growth along the Route 8 corridor in Adams could manifest in a number of adverse ways. Increasing demands on the transportation infrastructure from new commercial and/or industrial development should be a primary local concern. Demands on local utilities should also be a strong consideration when planning for development. Higher design standards for new land uses along Route 8 could dramatically improve the scenic character and visual appeal of the town's northern gateway.

II. EXISTING CONDITONS

Land and Environmental Characteristics (see map on following page)

The Route 8 corridor study area in Adams passes through a valley along the Hoosic River. The corridor lies to the west of the Hoosic River and below the Mount Greylock State Reservation. The eastern side of the corridor study area lies directly adjacent to the Hoosic River and some portions of the study area are within the 100-year floodplain. There are also some parcels in the study area that are partially or wholly within the priority habitats for state protected rare and endangered species as specified in the Natural Heritage Endangered Species

**Town of
Adams**

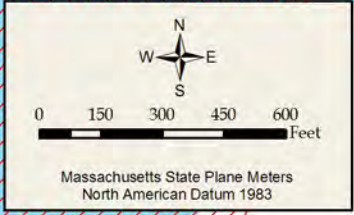
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**Route 8 Corridor Study
Environmental Constraints**

-  NHESP 2003 Priority Habitats for State-Protected Rare Species
-  FEMA 100yr Floodplain
-  Slope > 15%



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Atlas, 2003. To the west of the parcels immediately on the corridor, the land rises with steep slopes towards Mt. Greylock and thus development potential is limited to the land very proximate to Route 8.

Existing Land Use (see land use map on following page)

Data from assessors' records were used to assess land use and development trends along the Route 8 Corridor. Data collected for all land parcels abutting Route 8 included (See Appendix A):

- Ownership
- Parcel information
- Building information
- Use
- Zoning
- Assessed value of land and buildings

Acreage by Land Use

Land Type	Total Acreage	Percent of Total Acreage along Study Corridor
Residential	10.71	11%
Commercial	21.26	21%
Industrial	68.87	68%
Total Acreage	100.84	

Land Use Acreage Breakdown

Land Type	Acreage	Parcels
Residentially Developed	10.08	32
Potentially Developable Residential	.63	1
Sub Total	10.71	33
Commercial Retail Related	2.27	3
Commercial-Storage and Warehouse	1.0	1
Commercial Auto related	6.67	4
Commercial Office	1.9	1
Commercial-Developable	5.26	4
Commercial Undevelopable	1.2	1
Sub Total	21.26	14
Industrial-Manufacturing	36	10
Industrial-Developable	32	16
Sub Total	68	26
TOTAL FOR CORRIDOR	100	73

**Town of
Adams**

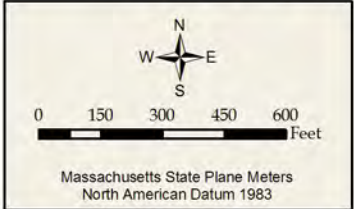
Community Development
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**Route 8 Corridor Study
Parcel Use**

- Residential - Developed
- Residential - Developable
- Commercial - Developed
- Commercial - Developable
- Commercial - Undevelopable
- Industrial - Developed
- Industrial - Developable



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The corridor study area consists of approximately one hundred acres (100ac). Based on current use, approximately twenty-one percent (21%), or twenty one acres, (21 ac), of the land located within the study is considered commercial land. Sixty-eight percent (68%), or sixty-eight acres (68 acres), of the corridor is considered to be industrial, and eleven percent (11%) or almost eleven acres is residential.

The parcel sizes along the corridor are small, with the residential parcels averaging less than 1/3 acre per lot, the commercial parcels only averaging 1.5 acres, and the industrial parcels only 2.6 acres. With few exceptions, redevelopment would require assemblage of parcels to create more viable development parcels. When considering redevelopment potential for specific areas, the uses and zoning of parcels not immediately on the corridor should be considered, both to create larger development parcels and to be sensitive to the possible impact on adjoining properties and neighborhoods of new development. This study did not consider those adjacent land uses and parcels.

The overall land use in the Route 8 Corridor Study Area is characterized by a moderately developed, mixed-use pattern dominated by industrial/manufacturing uses on the east side of Route 8, scattered small-scale commercial development, and residential uses concentrated on the west side of Route 8. There are also a good number of open or vacant, undeveloped lots. The structures along the corridor are typically one, or two story and there are a broad range of businesses found in the corridor including heavy industry, such as mining operations and specialty paper mills, to small-scale motels, restaurants and auto dealerships. Many of the properties are older and show a lack of investment.

As previously noted, the study corridor has some environmental constraints to development. The east side of the corridor contains a significant amount of wetlands. A number of sites in the study are within the Hoosic River floodplain which is a constraint to development as well. While not entirely undevelopable, compensatory storage of floodwater must be provided if encroachments occur in the floodplain. Steep slopes greater than 15% affect the development potential of portions of some land parcels, the west of parcels immediately on the corridor.

Zoning Review (see area zoning map on following page)

The corridor is made up of the following three zoning areas: I (Industrial), R-4 (Residential), and B-2 (Business). The following are the use regulations for each zone:

Zone	Minimum Lot Area SF	Minimum Lot Frontage (FT)	Maximum Building Coverage	Maximum Building Height (FT)
R-4	10,000	75	50%	30
I	20,000	100	25%	40
B-2	10,000	65	25%	30

**Town of
Adams**

Community Development
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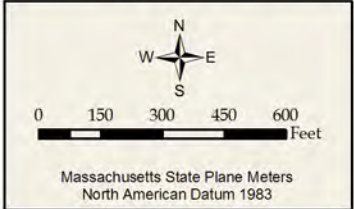
**Route 8 Corridor Study
Zoning**

Zoning

- B2
- I
- R4



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The corridor consists primarily of land that is zoned for industrial uses, nearly ninety-four percent (94%) of all land along the corridor. However, within the industrial zoning district there are a number of residentially and commercially used parcels. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the building square footage in the corridor is within the industrial use zone.

The three zoning districts within the study area provide for a wide range of potential uses and allow a fairly wide degree of flexibility for entities considering development in the corridor area. When comparing the zoning map to the existing land use map, or simply driving through the area, it is apparent that there is already a significant mix of uses, although these uses are not necessarily complimentary. It appears that the growth pattern has been sporadic and not managed with a larger vision in mind for the area. It is also apparent from the dates that many of the structures in the corridor were built that many of the uses probably pre-date local zoning regulations. Unfortunately, the mixture of uses contributes to a sense that the existing development in the corridor has not been well planned, is “obsolete”, and creates an image problem when seeking reinvestment in the properties.

Corridor Land Area and Building Space by Zone

Zone	Acres	% Corridor Acreage	Existing SF	% Corridor Bldg SF
R-4	2	2%	12,900	4%
I	94	94%	338,647	88%
B-2	4	4%	29,992	8%
TOTALS	100		381,539	

Utilities (see utilities map on following page)

The utility map for the area indicates that public water and sewer mains run directly beneath Route 8 for the entire length of the corridor in the study area. The map also shows that most of the side streets in the study area that intersect Route 8 from the west also are served by public utilities. The maps indicate that Brown Street, Apremont Street, Newark Street and a few other smaller side streets have water and sewer service. Parkhurst Ave, which intersects Route 8 toward the southern end of the study area, appears to have a public water connection, but no sewer connection at this time. It appears that all the parcels within the study are less than 500 ft (most are less than 150 ft) from a public water and sewer main. This implies that connectivity to the municipal water or sewer system would be relatively simple and inexpensive for any entity considering developing a property within the study area.

Commercial and Industrial Activities

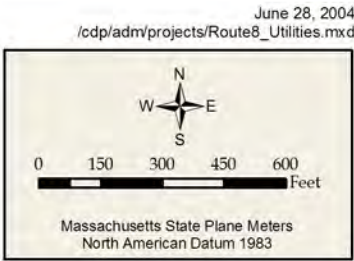
One of the town’s largest employers, Specialty Minerals, Inc. (SMI) is located in this segment of the Route 8 corridor. As of July 2004, SMI employed 163 people at the Adams plant. SMI is a well-established firm and their primary plant is a fully

Town of Adams

Community Development
Plan

Route 8 Corridor Study Utilities

- Water
- Sewer



developed, state-of-the-art facility. The firm has invested heavily in the maintenance and improvement of this site. This study is primarily to determine future development opportunities, and since the SMI operation is a long-standing economic success story in Adams, it has not been specifically included as part of the study area. However, its prominence in the area clearly establishes the corridor as an industrial area.

One of the area's other major industrial employers, Curtis Fine Paper, closed its local plant in July of 2003 displacing about 102 employees. It is estimated that the remaining small to medium-sized commercial and manufacturing business within the study area employ 100-200 additional workers. A significant portion of jobs in the Town are located within the study area.

The industrial land uses located along the corridor consist of a total of 206,636 square feet of floor space. Nearly 85% of this space is located at the now vacant Curtis Paper site. Commercial land uses contain about 60,586 sf of floor space that is randomly spotted along the entire corridor.

Zone	Acres	Developable Land (New Development)*	Actual Developable Land** in Square Feet
R-4	10.71	0	0
I	68.87	10.54	459,122
B-2	21.26	0	0
TOTALS	749.67	288.69	

*Developable land was calculated based on the amount of land available for additional building on already developed parcels and the potential new development of currently vacant parcels. This figure takes into account the following constraints considered prohibitive to development: Slopes greater than 15% and the existence of wetlands and floodplains. This number was calculated based on Geographic Information Systems data.

**Actual developable land was calculated based on trends in land use from 1985 to 1999 and used to perform a future build-out analysis as seen in the corridor study completed by Clough Harbor and Associates.

Information on land use and development gathered from municipal and other sources was analyzed to conduct a build-out analysis. The build-out analysis was based on sets of different assumptions regarding historical growth and use trends from 1985 to 1999. Once a potential use was determined from these

trends the potential square footage of new development was calculated by using the existing floor-to-area ratios for each zoning district (See Appendix A). Environmental and traffic impacts related to these alternative future conditions were compared, and the results should be helpful to Adams in developing and adopting land use policies and control measures to achieve a preferred future.

Property Values within the Study Area (see map on following page)

Of the 72 parcels that were inventoried in the Route 8 Study area, only 1 of the parcels was assessed at over \$1 million. There are no parcels in the study area assessed between \$500,000 and \$1 million. Seven (7) parcels have assessed values that are between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Nine (9) parcels have assessed values between \$100,000 and \$250,000. The remaining 55 parcels in the Study area have assessed values below \$100,000. The Total Assessed Value (TAV) for all the properties within the corridor study area is approximately \$8.2 million, once again this does not include SMI's plant site. As noted in the map of assessed values below, a number of the remaining undeveloped parcels have minimal assessed value and most likely minimal development potential due to a variety of physical and regulatory constraints.

III. Challenges and Opportunities for Economic Development in the Corridor

Challenges to Development

The primary obstacles to development in the Route 8 Corridor study area are:

- environmental and regulatory constraints (wetlands and floodplains)
- some blighted areas showing minimal reinvestment and stagnant property values
- under-utilization of existing developments and facilities
- strain on transportation infrastructure
- small parcel sizes and fragmented ownership
- lack of coherent development vision for the corridor or abutting areas

Development Constraints

A significant number of otherwise developable parcels on the eastern side of the corridor in the southern portion of the study area are mostly within priority habitat area for rare species. Some otherwise developable parcels on the east side of the corridor toward the northern end of the study area are within the floodplain. These conditions render a significant portion of the land on the east side of the corridor area either unusable, or extremely costly to develop. At least nine (9) otherwise developable parcels are either wholly or partially constrained, including most of the larger parcels. There also 7 vacant parcels clustered on the west side of the corridor at the Parkhurst Avenue intersection that are zoned for industry, however all of the lots appear to have insufficient frontage and lot size to accommodate any type of industrial operation.

Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

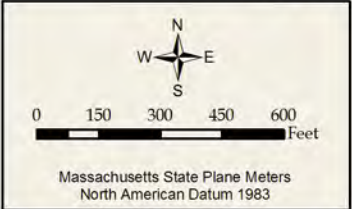
Route 8 Corridor Study Assessed Value Map

Assessed Value Map

- > \$1 Million
- \$250 K - \$500 K
- \$100 K - \$500 K
- < 100 K



June 28, 2004
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Blight and Lack of Reinvestment

There are number of vacant buildings and lots in the study area that appear to be poorly maintained and unkempt. A number of the existing businesses and homes in this area are in poor to fair condition and it appears that a number of land owners within the study area have not recently made any significant investments in their properties. It is difficult to attract new investment, or reinvestment, to any area that appears to be in decline. These factors can create a downward spiral of flat or decreasing property values and an increased reluctance to invest in the area.

Unused and Underutilized Properties

As noted above there are some vacant buildings scattered along the study area, and a number of vacant parcels fronting the corridor. The largest and most valuable property (in terms of assessed value and employment potential) in the study area (Curtis Fine Papers) is currently vacant, and has been for about a year. Each of the unused, or underused sites could be adding value to the Town in terms of additional tax revenue and providing quality jobs locally. However, as they remain vacant and are not maintained, they create a negative impact on adjoining properties and the corridor as a whole.

Strain on Transportation Infrastructure

The Route 8 Corridor is a major state highway providing regional north/south access. While through traffic on the Corridor itself is at a high level of service, some of the side streets intersecting the corridor have poor levels of service during peak hours. This Route 8/Renfrew intersection and the Route 8/Lime Street intersection already indicate poor levels of service when trying to enter the corridor from either of these side streets. When new development is projected in this area, the LOS on the side streets further diminishes to “F”. It is also likely that the two-lane segment of Route 8 between these two intersections is likely to experience a diminished level of service in the event of additional growth and development in the corridor. It is anticipated that the four-lane segment of the corridor from Lime Street to the town border with North Adams will have adequate capacity, even with new growth.

Small Parcel Sizes and Fragmented Ownership

Almost none of the parcels along the corridor are sufficient in size to allow a significant multi-use or large building development. A few of the larger industrial uses, such as the Curtis Fine Papers property, are large enough to accommodate a well-planned, modern development. The smaller parcels only add to the sense of “clutter” along the corridor. In order to change to investment dynamics along this corridor, it appears that some parcel assemblage would be required. Otherwise, the corridor will probably become more and more a commercial strip with various convenience and auto-related uses. To meet any significant development need, for instance to develop a modern mid-priced hotel, would probably require parcel assemblage.

Lack of Unified Development Vision for the Area

The zoning in the area is primarily geared toward industrial development and manufacturing, but the corridor itself is a hodge-podge of mixed uses that are not necessarily complimentary. For example there are private homes in close proximity to heavy industries. Well-planned mixed-use areas offer a number of complimentary aspects. Downtown Adams is a good example of complimentary mixed uses, i.e. retail storefronts with residential units with residential in close proximity, safe pedestrian access to a number of other principal uses such as restaurants, government buildings, churches and cultural venues. The Route 8 corridor has uses as far ranging as large factories and mining operations to auto dealerships and a motel, to single family homes. While most of the uses in the area are likely pre-existing uses that were in place prior to the adoption of the current zoning-by-laws, given the opportunity to plan for the future growth of the corridor it is not likely that the Town would have actively promoted growth in the way that it has occurred in the Corridor.

Opportunities for Economic Development

The primary opportunities for economic development along the Route 8 corridor are:

- reasonably priced property and low commercial tax rates
- availability of developable land
- appropriate zoning for industrial and commercial uses and designation as a economic target area (ETA)
- a regional need for modern industrial, manufacturing and business facilities
- availability of public utilities
- access to a reliable labor market and customer base.

Inexpensive Property and Low Tax Rates

There are 13 undeveloped parcels of property within the corridor having development potential that are assessed at less than \$100,000. The parcels range in size from .17 acres to 3.28 acres. The average assessed value per acre is approximately \$35,700. This range is reasonable, if not low, for undeveloped industrial property in the region. It is understood that the assessed values of these properties may not closely reflect their actual market value. For example, just about a half a mile north of the study area, the North Adams Plaza property was assessed at slightly under \$1 million and was just sold for about \$2.5 million. These types of transactions are likely to have a significant impact on future assessments and market values for properties in the corridor area. In spite of this recent development, it does appear that a number of the developable properties in the area may be acquired at a reasonable price.

Commercial Tax Rate 2002

City	Rate
Adams	\$20.88
North Adams	\$28.31
Pittsfield	\$28.52
Boston	\$30.33
Worcester	\$31.46
Springfield	\$34.82
Albany	\$35.11
Average Rate of Selected Cities	\$29.92

The commercial tax rate in Adams is considerably lower than the rate of its neighbor directly to the north. When compared to other cities in the region and across the State, Adams' rate is also about 30% below average. The commercial tax rate in Adams is significantly less than the major metropolitan areas to the east and west. Even though tax rates are not typically the primary factor in determining where to locate a business, they are certainly a consideration. The combination of reasonable prices for property combined with low tax rates can serve as strong incentive for businesses considering expansion or relocation.

Availability of Developable Land

While the small parcel sizes, environmental constraints, and fragmented ownership have all been identified as constraints to development/redevelopment, there are several vacant or under-developed parcels within the study area that may provide some development opportunities. The most likely opportunities exist on vacant parcels that are not considered to have significant regulatory or environmental constraints. The inventory of identified sites is provided in the chart on the following page. This study has identified 10 vacant parcels that appear to have development potential with no apparent constraints. Seven (7) of the parcels are very small, but those parcels are contiguous and, when combined, the properties comprise 2.17 acres. All seven parcels also have a single owner, which implies that the land could be easily assembled as a larger lot for the purposes of sale or development. The parcels are clustered in the vicinity of Parkhurst Ave. and Route 8. Another vacant property that is unconstrained is a half-acre parcel that is at the northern edge of the study directly behind the old Bounty Fare restaurant site. There is also an unconstrained vacant parcel that is located on the west side of Howland Ave (Route 8) about a block north of Butler Street. The parcel is about 2/3 of an acre and is zoned for industry, but the site is flanked by residential properties on both sides. The final vacant parcel that is unconstrained is a 1-acre site that is on the east side of the corridor about 2 blocks north of Butler Street.

Parcels Identified for Development Potential

Parcel No.	Status	Acres	LAND SF	MAX Allowable BLDG SF	Zoning	Assessed Value
101-6	Vacant	0.47	20,473	15,355	I	30,300
102-15	Vacant	0.63	27,443	20,582	I	15,000
103-22	Vacant	0.4	17,424	13,068	I	41,900
103-21	Vacant	0.37	16,117	12,088	I	22,300
103-20	Vacant	0.44	19,166	14,375	I	24,500
103-19	Vacant	0.17	7,405	5,554	I	20,500
103-18	Vacant	0.34	14,810	11,108	I	22,400
103-17	Vacant	0.26	11,326	8,494	I	18,900
103-16	Vacant	0.19	8,276	6,207	I	26,300
101-8	Vacant	1.6	69,696	52,272	I	43,200
102-18.1 (PC)	Vacant	3.28	142,877	107,158	I	66,400
102-18.2	Vacant	0.98	42,689	32,017	I	33,100
102-26	Developed but Vacant	11.8	514,008	385,506	I	1,851,400
103-5 (PC)	Vacant Land	3.03	131,987	98,990	I	44,600
103-8 (PC)	Vacant Land	24.02	1,046,311	784,733	I	201,000
TOTAL		47.98	2,090,009	1,567,506		2,461,800

(PC) indicates that parcel is partially constrained

There are three other vacant properties that have some development potential, but have a portion of the site that is constrained and could not likely be developed. The largest parcel in the study area is 24 acres. This parcel is currently vacant, but only about 4.6 acres of the parcel is suitable for development. This property fronts Route 8 on the east side of the corridor and extends from Lime Street north to opposite Newark Street. Various portions of this parcel have steep slopes, wetlands and fall within a priority habitat for protected rare species. The second vacant parcel that is developable, but partially constrained is 3 acre site that fronts the corridor on the east side and is located between opposite Newark Street and Orcutt Street. It appears that only about an acre, or 1/3, of the property is actually developable as a portion of the

site is within the priority habitat area. There is another 3.28 acre parcel located on the east side of the corridor about 2 blocks south of the Adams/North Adams border that has development potential, but is also partially constrained by the floodplain. It appears that about ¼ acre of the site is actually developable.

In addition to parcels available for new development, there also parcels available for redevelopment. The primary candidate for redevelopment is the recently vacated 12-acre Curtis Paper Mill Site located on the eastern side of the corridor at the corner of Railroad Ave and Route 8. This property is the most highly valued property in the study area, assessed at \$1.85 million. The factory site has several manufacturing and office buildings comprising over 175,000 sf of building space. Any new investment, or redevelopment at this site is likely to serve as a catalyst for the entire corridor, or at a minimum the area in immediate proximity. Redevelopment of this site would likely result in significant local job creation and revenue enhancement for Adams.

In reality, to provide competitive sites for new industry, an aggressive program of parcel consolidation and redevelopment, including some functionally obsolete buildings and incompatible residential properties, would probably be required, given the various environmental constraints coupled with small parcel sizes.

Appropriate Zoning for Industrial uses and Designation as an Economic Target Area (ETA)

The entire corridor study area is zoned by right for a range of industrial uses of various scales and intensities allowing potential developers a degree of flexibility. Generally, the only local reviews and permits required would be site plan review and a building permit, both of which are relatively quick and easy to obtain. As discussed in the previous section, even though this portion of the corridor is primarily zoned for industrial use, the actual uses vary greatly and many of the parcels in the area do not take advantage of the highest, best use of the property.

Another factor that provides a very strong incentive for development is the fact that Adams and other neighboring municipalities are recognized as one of the State's designated Economic Target Areas (ETA). A limited number of communities in the Commonwealth have been granted this designation and it allows designated municipalities to participate in the Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP). The EDIP allows communities to offer businesses and enterprises a wide range of incentives to relocate or expand operations in the town and they in turn are required to create new local jobs. While many other factors are much more important to businesses considering location in a town or region, the EDIP does provide an additional incentive to consider Adams. It should be noted that the ETA designation applies to the entire town, but to actually assist a potential business with a specific project Adams would need to designate an even more geographically specific Economic Opportunity Area (EOA). Ultimately any specific project would also need to be certified by the State

to be eligible for the incentive programs, however nearly all projects that have been submitted have been approved. The Town might wish to consider whether to designate the Route 8 Corridor study area as a specific Economic Opportunity Area (EOA).

Regional Need for Modern Industrial/Manufacturing and Business Facilities

The total number of sites throughout the region that are zoned for industrial and manufacturing uses are extremely limited, as has been identified as recently as the Berkshire Economic Development Sites Study (Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, 1999). Meeting the needs of “home-grown” businesses for spaces of varying sizes to accommodate expansion, or entrepreneurial “start-ups” for incubator support and space has become more crucial throughout the region. Numerous regional studies and assessments have focused on the lack of and/or inadequacy of industrial sites available to businesses for relocation into the region and existing firms needing sites and buildings suitable for expansion. Despite the loss of manufacturing, which has taken place over the past thirty years, there is not a surplus of well serviced and “shovel ready” sites available. This is also true in Adams. There is also a strategic interest in the redevelopment of brownfield sites, and other antiquated industrial sites in the region. This interest, coupled with the lack of and/or inadequacy of industrial and office sites in the region, indicates that the Route 8 Corridor in Adams may have potential for expansion and or redevelopment.

Availability of Public Utilities

The availability and proximity to public water and sewer mains, and the excess treatment capacity of the Town’s systems greatly enhances the corridor’s development potential and increases landowners’ ability to market their properties. As previously noted, every parcel in the corridor can easily connect to the existing public water and sewer system, if they have not done so already. The fact that these public utilities are available can result in significant cost savings for potential developers. Generally, significant business developments, particularly manufacturing, require public utilities to have adequate fire protection. In other cases public water and sewer services may be available in the general area but the potential developer may need to pay for a lengthy extension to be able to connect to the system. This is the case right across the border in some areas of North Adams. A public water and sewer system is in place, but some parcels are 1500 to 2000 feet from the nearest main and the cost for extending connections these distances can be very costly and serve as deterrent to potential developers.

Access to a Reliable Labor Market and Customer Base

Two primary factors that businesses typically consider when expanding or relocating are: is there a skilled work force available locally and are there customers in the area or the region that will purchase their particular product or service?

Adams has generally had one of the highest unemployment rates in the Commonwealth. In large part, this is due to the various manufacturing plant closings that have occurred, even within the past year. Many of these workers have been well-trained and were very reliable as a workforce to their previous employers. They would welcome new job opportunities in the community. Similarly, North Adams and other northern Berkshire towns have a higher than average unemployment rate, resulting from manufacturing plant closings, and those workers are available to new or expanding businesses in Adams.

Adams is also in the fortunate position of having an up and coming four-year state college nearby, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) and is also within a few miles of a world-renowned liberal arts institution, Williams College. Berkshire Community College provides significant education programs, particularly in conjunction with the Berkshire Applied Technology Council, which are aimed at meeting employers' needs for an educated workforce. These type of institutions provide potential employers with a higher level of comfort when considering whether to expand or relocate their businesses. Businesses view higher education institutions as excellent resources for employees, training opportunities and community support networks.

Due to the global nature of the economy, the second factor of proximity to customers has become somewhat less important, particularly with regard to manufacturing and certain types of services such as communications and customer support services. However, in terms of most retail enterprises, there needs to be a strong local/regional customer base. Based on the increasing number of new luxury homes that are being built and the expanding number of commercial franchises and big-box retailers that are emerging throughout the region it is apparent that the Berkshires has a relatively strong consumer base to support these businesses.

IV. Findings and Recommendations

The key findings of this analysis are that in spite of a number of challenging factors, this area has potential for economic development and commercial growth. The study noted that while the Town has made strong efforts at revitalization, particularly in the downtown area, the overall economic conditions in terms of employment, income levels and property values still lag behind the region, the state and the nation.

The study found that one of the key challenges to economic development in the study area included constraints to developable land that could complicate or prohibit the development of a number parcels in the area. Parcel sizes are small and ownership fragmented so that land assembly is needed to achieve meaningful economic improvements in the corridor. It was also determined that some parts of the study area are blighted and some owners have failed to reinvest, and some cases to even maintain their properties. This circumstance

acts as a deterrent to new investment or even existing owners interested expanding their operations. Finally, it was noted that some of the key parcels in the study area were significantly underutilized and that the growth in the corridor has been sporadic and has not been managed with a specific vision to guide land use decisions.

The study concluded that considerable, focused efforts are necessary to redevelop the corridor. The study area was noted as having developable land that is appropriately zoned for business and industry. It was determined that the Town also has established the conditions for a “business-friendly” regulatory environment that provides for flexibility in developing and financing development projects. It was also concluded that there is a regional need for additional industrial/business space and Adams has some properties within the corridor that are suitable for these uses. The fact that the public utility infrastructure in the study area is also available and accessible was also acknowledged as a major benefit in terms of attracting business to the area. The study also discussed a number of other factors that enhance the opportunity for economic development within the study area, such as inexpensive land, relatively low taxes and a reliable local labor market that add to the corridor’s attractiveness as an area for future growth and development.

Based on these findings, this study concludes that the corridor merits further planning and investigation and proposes the following recommendations

Recommended Actions

1. Develop more focused plans for specific improvement and development projects in the Route 8 Corridor. These should include:
 - Contact owners of key parcels within the corridor to determine their interest in developing/redeveloping their properties.
 - Work to assemble parcels into larger tracts which would be more developable.
 - Work with regional planning and economic development organizations to obtain funding for advanced planning, marketing analyses and/or to prepare a site specific redevelopment plan for developable properties within the corridor, particularly the recently vacated Curtis Paper Mill site.
 - Consider aesthetic improvements to the Route 8 corridor gateway area, for example improved signage and streetscaping to provide a uniform identity to the corridor area.
 - Connect interested property owners within the corridor with organizational resources that can assist them in designing, financing and developing their properties.
 - Prepare and disseminate informational materials to businesses and property owners in the corridor discussing the benefits available through the Economic Target Area (ETA). Materials can be printed

material, such as a brochure or digital media such as the town website.

- Designate key portions of the Route 8 Corridor as an Economic Opportunity Area (EOA).
2. Develop a comprehensive vision for the Route 8 Corridor; including the “Gateway” area studied in 2003, working with a variety of stakeholders and interests, and build a consensus regarding appropriate directions and actions. Specific steps might be:
 - Circulate this report to the appropriate Town officials and community stakeholders for review and consideration
 - Prepare an Initial Project Brief and submit it to the Berkshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee to ensure that the Curtis Paper Mill site and any other selected sites in the corridor are listed as regional priorities for economic assistance.
 - Work with property owners to ensure that marketable undeveloped or underdeveloped properties are listed on the Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development (MAED) and the Berkshire Chamber of Commerce Site Listing websites. This is a marketing and promotional tool that can assist property owners to connect with potential purchasers, developers or tenants.
 - Identify and work with local or regional economic development entities to design and conduct a more comprehensive opinion survey of property and business owners within the corridor to determine needs and establish a vision for growth within the corridor.
 - Work cooperatively with area economic development organizations, such as Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, to host a business forum for business and property owners to determine key issues of concern and to discuss ways to promote development within the Route 8 Corridor area (the towns of Lee and Dalton have recently hosted successful forums)
 3. Review existing regulations and update or create regulations which better fit the vision for the corridor and which encourage or require that future land development activities work toward meeting that vision.
 - Existing zoning should be reviewed and both the zoning map and allowable uses and standards within the zoning districts might be modernized to meet current conditions and standards.
 - Existing sign standards should be reviewed and considered for amendment if needed.
 - Corridor access management techniques should be implemented along the corridor to reduce curb cuts and improve traffic safety, enabling the corridor to better handle traffic flow in the future. Consider developing driveway bylaws, including design standards.

- Consider a property maintenance bylaw that deals with removal or screening of junk and the maintenance of vacant lots.
- Consider a screening requirement for outdoor storage of material and equipment.

Organizational Resources in the Region

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Berkshire Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee

Berkshire Chamber of Commerce

Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation

Northern Berkshire Industrial Park & Development Corporation

	107-40					-													
	107-53					-													
	101-8	Vacant Land	1.6			69,696	0.000		1200.000	2400.000	326	326	-	52,272	0%	NA	I	43,200	NA
	101-9	Mfg Processing	3.62			157,687	0.139					400	21,840	118,265	18%	1974	I	48,900	377,600
	102-18.1	Dev Com Land	3.28	0.27		142,877	0.000	4704.480	1411.344	2822.688	334	390	-	107,158	0%	NA	I	66,400	NA
	102-18.2	Dev Com Land	0.98	0.29		42,689	0.000	5052.960	1515.888	3031.776	325	390	-	32,017	0%	NA	I	33,100	NA
	102-19	Billboard	1			43,560	0.000					423	-	32,670	0%	1998	I	42,100	5,400
	102-20	Vacant Land	0.2	0.23		8,712	0.000	4007.520				400	-	6,534	0%	NA	I	11,900	NA
	102-21	Powdershield	1.8			78,408	0.459					400	35,994	58,806	61%	NA	I	40,600	378,800
	102-22		3.2			139,392	0.012					400	1,620	104,544	2%	1977	I	51,900	53,100
	102-23.2					-								-			I		
	102.23.1					-								-			I		
	102-26	Crown Paper	11.8	0.58		514,008	0.344	10105.920	3031.776	6063.552	400	400	176,793	385,506		1900	I	187,900	1,663,500
	103-1	Fuel Service	1.08			47,045	0.132					333	6,218	35,284	18%	1931	I	45,600	75,500
	103-2	Commercial	0.67			29,185	0.238					326	6,933	21,889	32%	1900	I	52,300	221,700
	103-3	Vacant Land	1.2			52,272	0.000					392	-	39,204	0%	NA	I	4,100	NA
	103-4	Industrial	2.6	0.45		113,256	0.014	7840.800	2352.240	4704.480	400	400	1,640	84,942	2%	1945	I	33,000	11,800
	103-5	Vacant Land	3.03	0.9		131,987	0.000	15681.600	4704.480	9408.960	325	440	-	98,990	0%	NA	I	44,600	NA
	103-6	Multi-Family	0.3			13,068	0.295					111	3,858	9,801	39%	1889	I	27,100	51,000
	103-7	Single Family	0.09			3,920	0.245					101	960	2,940	33%	1900	I	20,200	35,000
	103-8	Vacant Land	24.02	4.63		1,046,311	0.000	80673.120	24201.936	48403.872	400	440	-	784,733	0%	NA	I	201,000	NA
	103-9	Two Family	0.36			15,682	0.098					104	1,531	11,761	13%	1900	I	28,800	34,400
	103-10	Single Family	0.2			8,712	0.169					101	1,472	6,534	23%	1900	I	25,000	57,100
	103-11	Three Family	0.23			10,019	0.328					105	3,284	7,514	44%	1900	I	25,700	63,400
	103-12	Single Family	0.14			6,098	0.264					101	1,609	4,574	35%	1900	I	18,800	41,800
	103-13	Two Family	0.18			7,841	0.298					104	2,338	5,881	40%	1900	I	24,500	25,300
	103-14	Vacant Land	0.51	0.11		22,216	4,792	1916.640	574.992	1149.984	325	440	-	16,662	0%	NA	I	31,800	
	103-15	Vacant Land	0.1	0.03		4,356	1,307	522.720	156.816	313.632		440	-	3,267	0%	NA	I	15,400	
	104-12	Vacant Land	0.63	0.19		27,443	8,276	3310.560	993.168	1986.336	326	440	-	20,582	0%	NA	I	30,300	
	104-11	Vacant Land	0.69	0.2		30,056	8,712	3484.800	1045.440	2090.880	340	440	-	22,542	0%	NA	I	32,600	
	104-14	Vacant Land	0.06			2,614						440	-	1,960	0%	NA	I	11,000	
	104-13	Vacant Land	0.81	0.25		35,284	10,890	4356.000	1306.800	2613.600	326	440	-	26,463	0%	NA	I	31,000	
	104-15	Vacant Land	0.86	0.26		37,462	11,326	4530.240	1359.072	2718.144	325	440	-	28,096	0%	NA	I	54,200	
	104-16	Vacant Land	3	0.92		130,680	40,075	16030.080	4809.024	9618.048	356	440	-	98,010	0%	NA	I	70,900	
																		2,544,900	

68.24
23.7

4.216

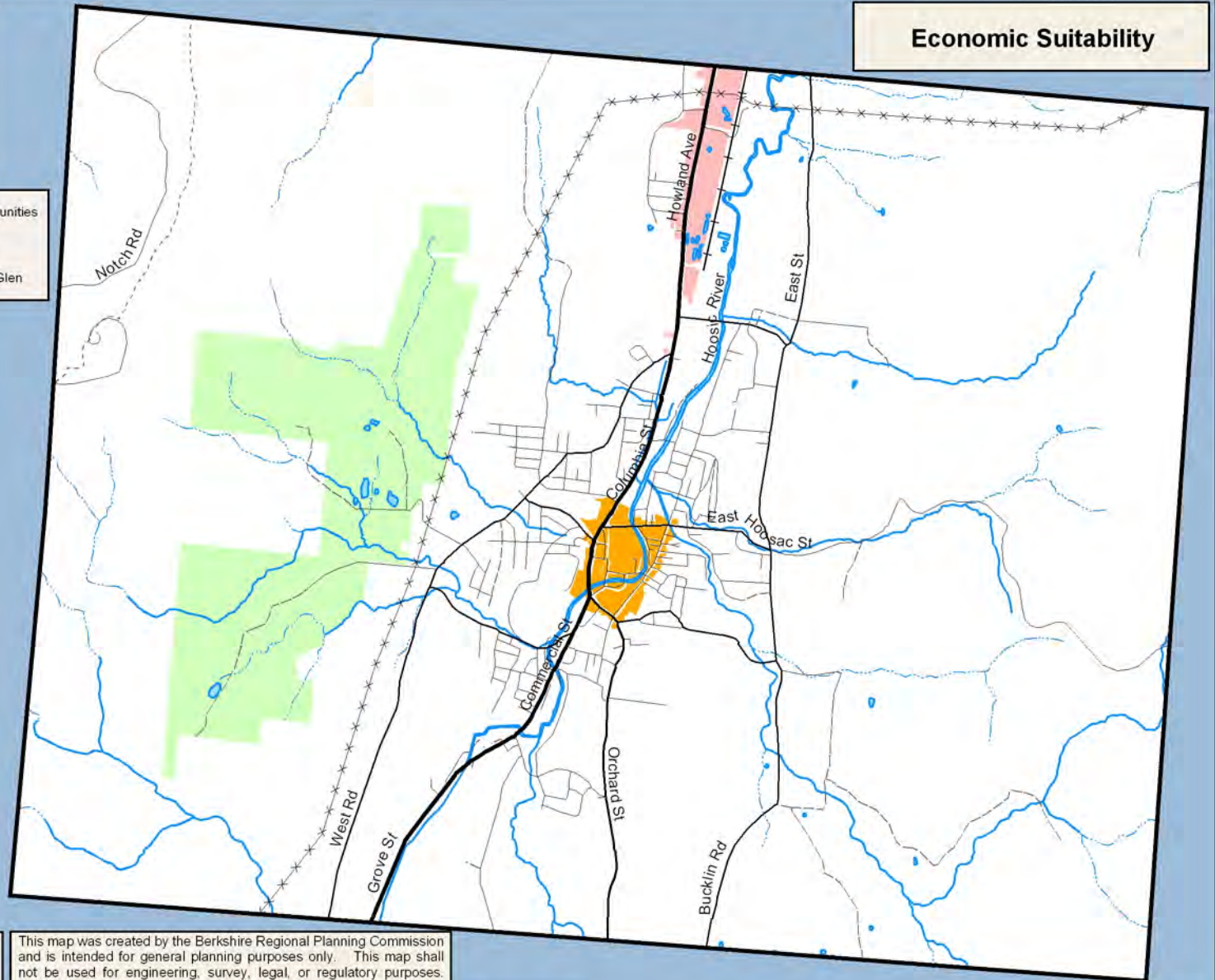
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Town of Adams Community Development Plan

- Identify Economic Redevelopment / Infill Opportunities
- Implement Downtown Development Plan
- Implement Amended Master Plan for Greylock Glen

Economic Suitability

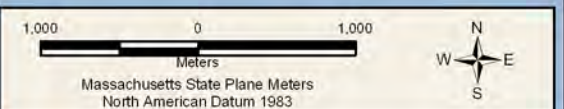


/cdp/adm/projects/economic_suit.mxd
June 28, 2004

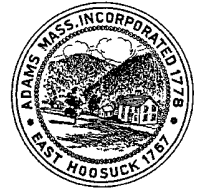


This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, BRPC, or the Town provided all of the data layers used to create this map.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



Transportation



Introduction to the Transportation Element



The Transportation Element provides the Town of Adams with a comprehensive Corridor Access Management Study that assesses transportation issues along the Route 8 Corridor from Hoosac Street north to the Adams/North Adams municipal boundary. The Study evaluates transportation as it relates to land use along the corridor to better integrate opportunities for economic development, to improve the flow of traffic and overall safety, and to identify areas in need of visual enhancements. Technical analysis of key intersections within the corridor was conducted as part of the study using current traffic data and projected data based on anticipated area build-out.

Route 8 Corridor Study – Adams & North Adams

Transportation Element

July 2004



Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
1 Fenn Street Suite 201
Pittsfield, MA 01201

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The access management study focuses on the Route 8 corridor from Hoosac Street in Adams to Hodges Cross Road in North Adams. Route 8 is the only major north-south access road serving Adams and North Adams. It is classified as a principal arterial and the primary purpose of a principal arterial is to provide uninterrupted passage for through traffic. Therefore, preservation of capacity and level of service of Route 8 is important in light of anticipated development along this corridor.

1.1 Goals

The goals of this traffic analysis include:

- Evaluate impacts of developments (e.g., redevelopment of North Adams Plaza) and on-street parking along the corridor on capacity and level of service of Route 8
- Evaluate intersections with respect to capacity and geometric layout for present and future build-out scenarios
- Evaluate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Identify safety issues and recommend countermeasures
- Identify opportunities for access management

1.2 Study Area

The approximate length of the study area along the Route 8 corridor is 3.0 miles (2.4 miles in Adams and 0.6 miles in North Adams). Please refer to Appendix 1 for the study area and intersections that were evaluated in this study. Preliminary field visits revealed that most future developments are likely to take place in the North Adams section of the study area, but the study evaluated both the Adams and North Adams segments of Route 8 together due to:

- Proximity of downtown Adams to the anticipated developments on the North Adams portion of Route 8. A joint study enables identification of impacts of developments in North Adams on downtown Adams and thereby suggests necessary traffic/highway improvements in Adams
- Relative shortness of the study area of Route 8 segment in North Adams
- The need to consider the route as a single transportation corridor without regard to artificial boundaries.

Route 8 has two lanes from Hoosac Street to Lime Street in Adams. From Lime Street to the North Adams city line it has four lanes with a painted median. The study section in North Adams has four lanes and a raised center median. The speed limit varies from 20 mph near the Adams Middle School to 45 mph in North Adams. In downtown Adams, the speed limit is 25 mph (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: On-street parking and 25 mph speed limit on Route 8 in downtown Adams

MHD maintains the North Adams portion of Route 8 that was evaluated by this study. The Town of Adams Department of Public Works (DPW) is currently responsible for the maintenance of Route 8 in Adams. As mentioned by the Highway Superintendent of Adams, the town is negotiating with MHD to transfer maintenance responsibility of Route 8 to MHD, and in return, to take responsibility for maintaining Route 116, which is presently maintained by MHD. To maintain the heavily traveled Route 8 corridor requires more resources than to maintain Route 116. Therefore, the town would like MHD, which has more resources at its disposal, to maintain Route 8. The town maintains secondary roads in the area (e.g., Hoosac Street, Friend Street, Lime Street, etc).

2.0 TRAFFIC VOLUMES

The average annual daily traffic (AADT) volumes of important roads in the study area are given in Table 1. The AADT is the average 24-hour traffic volume at a given location during a certain year. To estimate AADT, BRPC conducts traffic counts for 48 consecutive hours (or more) during weekdays and determines the 24-hour average volume. Thereafter, the 24-hour average volume is adjusted by a seasonal factor to account for variations in traffic volume during different months of the year.

Table 1: AADT of major roads in study area

Road	Town	Location	AADT	Year
Route 8	-	North Adams & Adams Town Line	15,400	2003
Hodges Cross Road	North Adams	East of Route 8	6,190	2004
Furnace Street	North Adams	West of Route 8	1,055	2004
Route 8	Adams	North of Hoosac Street	18,350	2002
Hoosac Street	Adams	East of Depot Street	4,295	2004
Depot Street	Adams	North of East Maple Street	3,690	2002
Friend Street	Adams	West of Route 8	2,535	2004
Renfrew Street	Adams	East of Route 8	1,600	2002
Lime Street	Adams	East of Route 8	1,500	2002

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

2.1 Discussion

As expected, Route 8 carries the highest traffic volume. Hodges Cross Road has the second highest traffic volume. Hoosac Street and Friend Street play an important role by providing accessibility to local communities and connectivity to the main road.

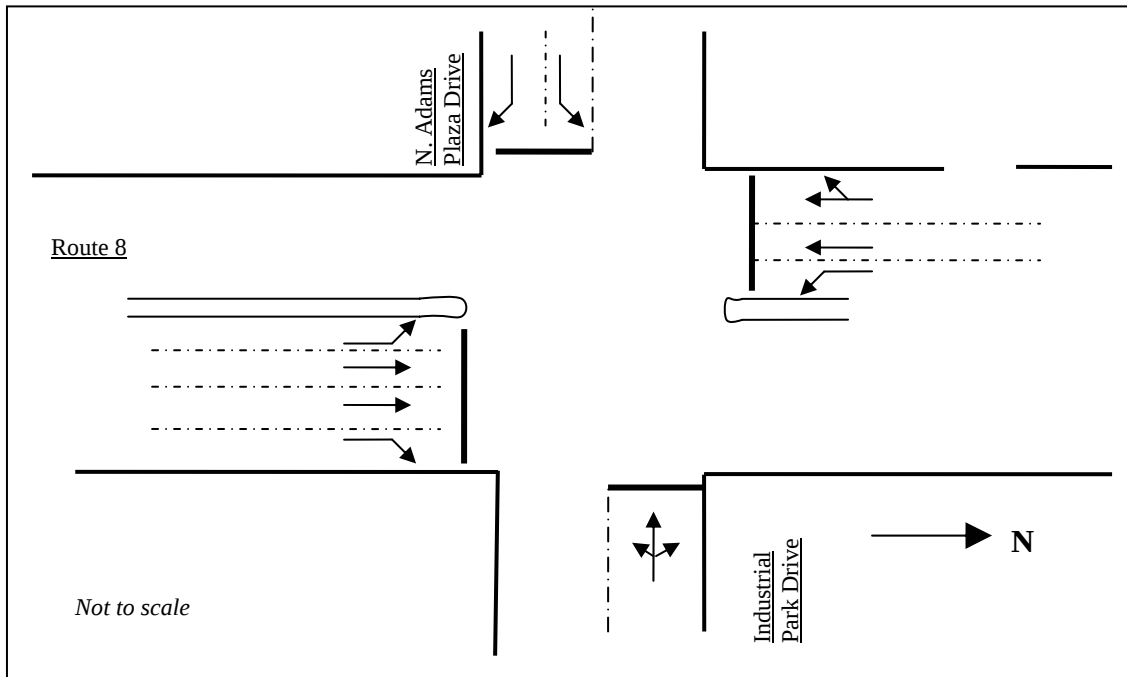
Hoosac Street intersects with Route 8 within downtown Adams; Friend Street intersects with Route 8 about 0.6 miles from the north edge of the downtown. At both these intersections, Route 8 has only one lane per direction. Depot Street is used by many drivers to by-pass Park Street (i.e., a segment of Route 8 between Center Street and Hoosac Street), where the travel speed is generally low. Capacity and level of service of the study area corridor are analyzed under the “traffic impact analysis”.

3.0 INTERSECTIONS

There are two signalized intersections in the study area: North Adams Plaza/ Robert Hardman Industrial Park, and Hodges Cross Road (Rt. 8A). The other significant intersections along Route 8 in the study area are Hoosac Street, Valley Street, Friend Street/Renfrew Street, and Lime Street. MHD has installed underground ducts at Hoosac Street, Friend Street, and Lime Street for possible signalization in the future. This study also evaluated the Furnace Street/ Route 8 intersection, which is located north of the study area. The characteristics of intersections are discussed in the following sections and a quantitative performance analysis of the intersections (i.e., level of service analysis) is presented in “traffic impact analysis.”

3.1 Hardman Industrial Park, North Adams Plaza and Route 8

This is a four-way signalized intersection located in North Adams. The northbound approach of Route 8 has two through lanes, one left turn lane, and one right turn lane. The southbound approach of Route 8 has three lanes (one lane is for left turns). The North Adams Plaza approach has two lanes; the Hardman Industrial Park approach has one lane. A driveway located ahead of the intersection allows vehicles to turn from Route 8 south onto North Adams Plaza, and this driveway eliminates the need to use the main entrance.



Schematic representation of Route 8, Industrial Park and North Adams Plaza intersection

3.1.1 Issues

At present, there is minimal traffic movement on North Adams Plaza Road as the shopping center is largely vacant. The majority of traffic movement on Industrial Park

Road takes place during morning and evening peak hours. As such, for most of the day, this intersection is under-utilized. However, with the anticipated expansion of activities in Industrial Park and North Adams Plaza, the intersection may experience higher traffic volumes in the future. On May 25, 2004, the North Adams Transcript reported that the North Adams Plaza had been sold to a shopping center developer. Even though the exact future development is unknown, the newspaper speculated about a big box retail development such as Target, Best Buy, or Home Depot. The impact of such development on the intersection depends both on the type and magnitude of the development. Moreover, a timeline for the new development is still unknown. The traffic impact study section of the report examines the likely impact of a new super store (with some assumptions) on the intersection and the Route 8 corridor.

3.1.2 Recommendations

None.



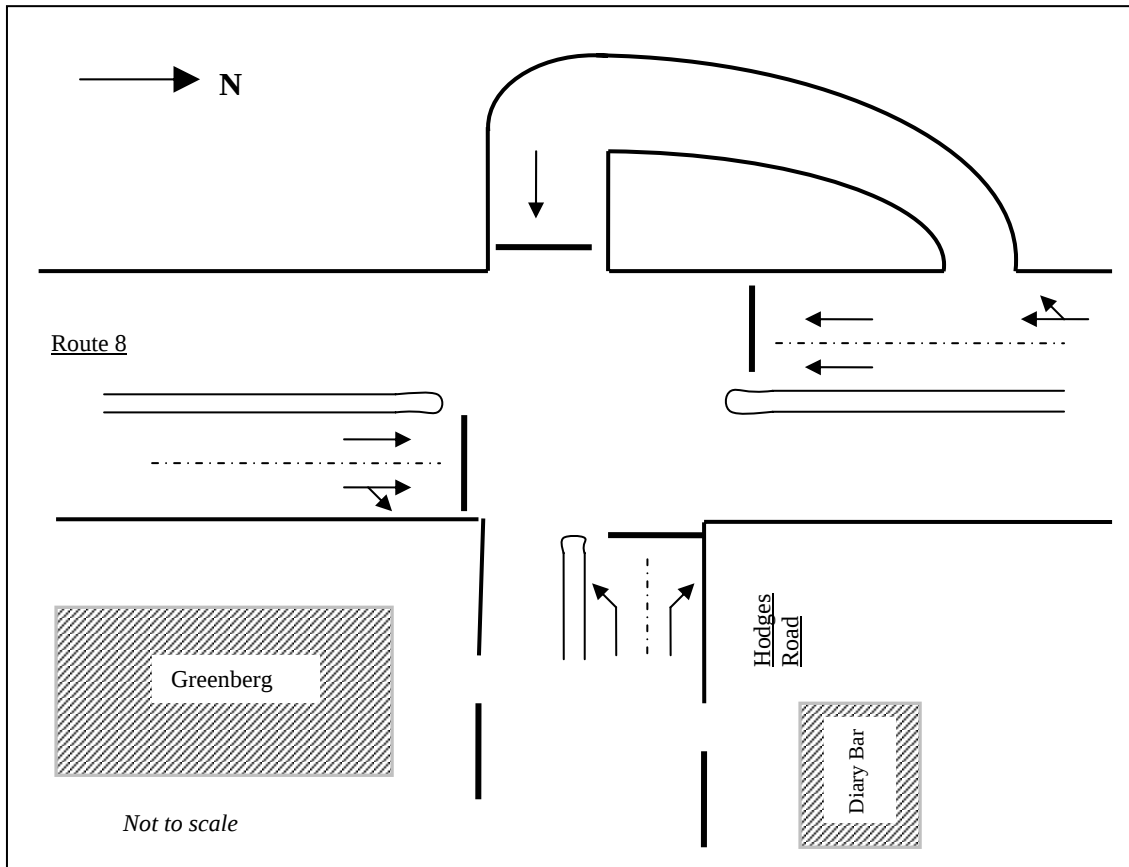
Entrance to North Adams Plaza

3.2 Hodges Cross Road (8A) and Route 8

This is a four-way signalized intersection located in North Adams. Both approaches of Route 8 and Hodges Cross Road have two lanes in each direction. The westbound approach is a one-way and one-lane street. In reality, the traffic on this road is comprised entirely of vehicles turning left from the Route 8 southbound approach onto Hodges Cross Road. These vehicles are diverted ahead of the intersection onto the one-way street that connects to the intersection from the west. The one-way approach eliminates left turns at the intersection.

3.2.1 Discussion

There is development on the northeast and southeast quadrants of the intersection. Access driveways from these properties connect to Hodges Cross Road. These driveways do not create significant traffic conflicts. At present, this intersection does not experience heavy traffic volume except during peak hours. Therefore, this intersection appears to have the capacity to accommodate more traffic in the future. Refer to “traffic safety” and “traffic impact analysis” sections for more details.



Schematic representation of Route 8 and Hodges Cross Road intersection

3.2.2 Recommendations

None.



View looking west from Hodges Cross Road

3.3 Furnace Street and Route 8

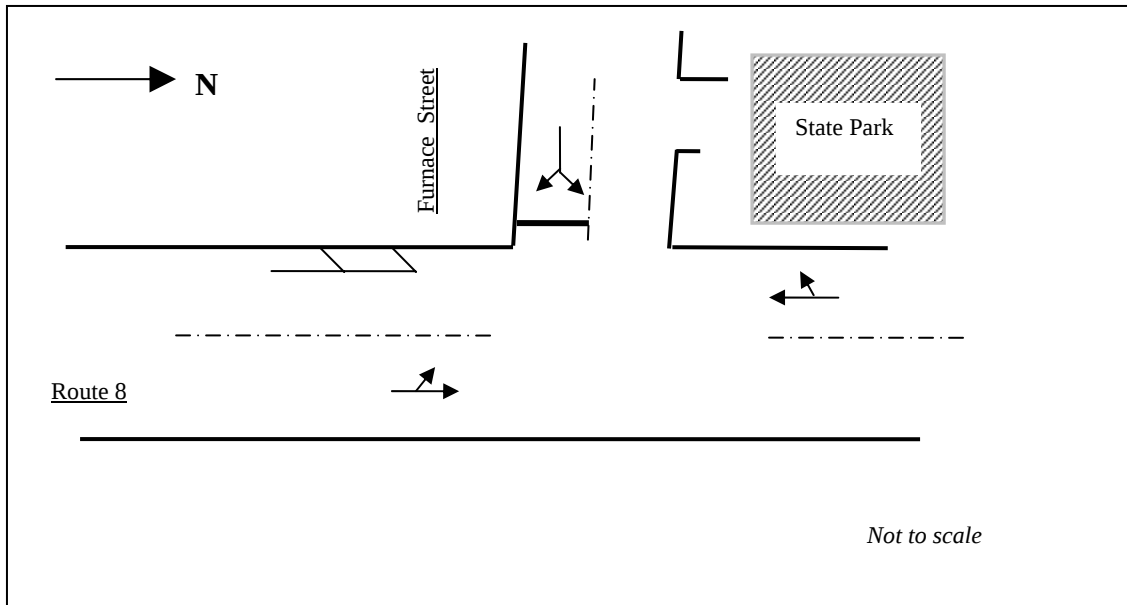
This is a three-way intersection located in downtown North Adams. A stop sign controls traffic entering from Furnace Street. Route 8 has one lane in each direction and is divided by a painted median. On-street parking is allowed on the west side of the northbound approach of Route 8. Furnace Street has one lane each direction. Sidewalks are available on Route 8 and on the south side of Furnace Street.

3.3.1 Discussion

Furnace Street is narrow (~10-foot wide lanes), curvy, and comes downhill as it approaches the intersection. As a result, the speeds of vehicles are low. Western Gateway Heritage State Park is located on the northwest quadrant. The access to the State Park is provided from Furnace Street. Since the traffic volume of Furnace Street is relatively low, this intersection functions without notable difficulties for most of the day. However, if the traffic volume on Furnace Street increases in the future, the vehicles entering Route 8 from Furnace Street may experience lengthy delays due to the high traffic volume on Route 8. The level of service of Furnace Street can be reduced significantly in the event of growth in traffic due to narrow lanes, high grade, and lack of space for road widening.

3.3.2 Recommendations

None.



Schematic representation of Route 8 and Furnace Street intersection

3.4 Hoosac Street and Route 8

This is a three-way uncontrolled intersection located in downtown Adams. Hoosac Street, which intersects Route 8 from the east side, provides access to a school and several residential and commercial properties. On the northbound approach of Route 8, parking is allowed on the east side. Pedestrian crossings are located on the northbound approach of Route 8 and on Hoosac Street (see Figure 2).

3.4.1 Issues

The following observations were made by the study team during a field visit.

- The land development along Hoosac Street is fairly dense. As a result, this intersection experiences significant traffic volume during morning and afternoon peak hours. The critical movement at this intersection is the left turn from Hoosac Street onto Route 8.
- The sight distance for vehicles entering from Hoosac Street onto Route 8 is inadequate. The reasons for inadequate sight distance include a building located at the northeast quadrant, and parking on the east side of northbound approach of Route 8. As a result, vehicles can be seen waiting beyond the stop line, thus blocking the pedestrian crossing (see Figure 3).
- Depot Street, which connects to Hoosac Street very close to the above intersection, gives rise to conflicting traffic movements. In addition, the sight distance from the west side for vehicles entering Hoosac Street from Depot Street is inadequate.
- The turning radius for trucks entering the main road from Hoosac Street is inadequate.
- Refer to traffic safety section and traffic impact analysis section of the report for analyses of other issues at this intersection.

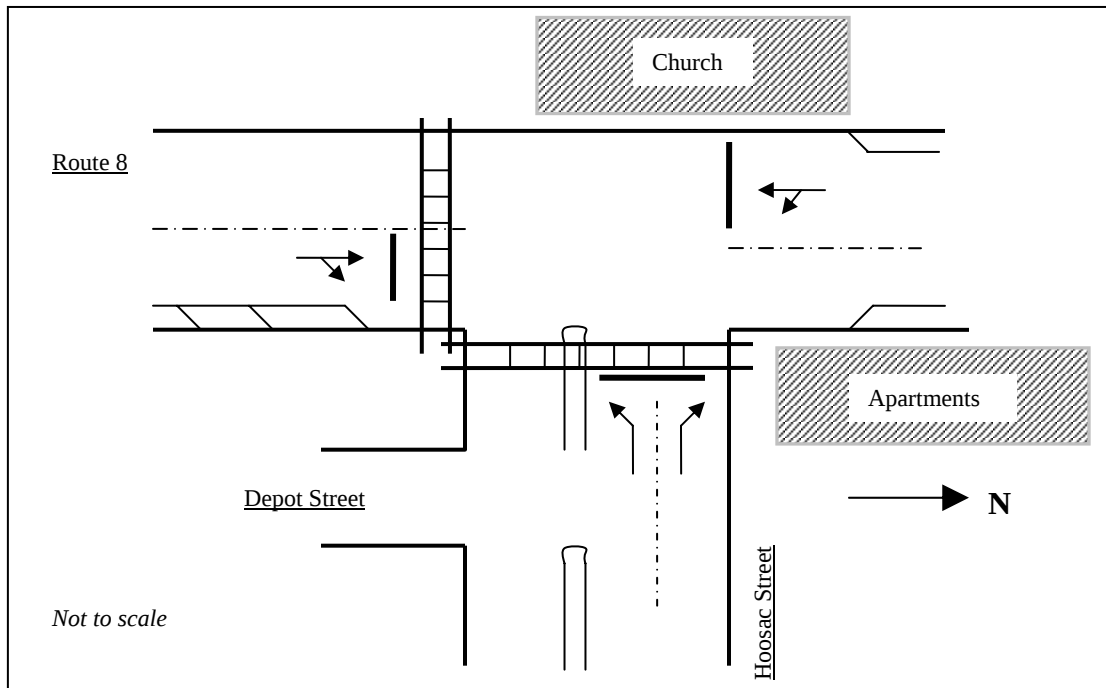


Figure 2: Schematic representation of Route 8 and Hoosac Street intersection



Figure 3: Truck blocking pedestrian crossing on Hoosac Street

3.4.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the observations made during site visits. Therefore, a more detailed study is suggested to substantiate these recommendations.

- The possibility of prohibition of trucks entering onto the main road from Hoosac Street should be investigated.

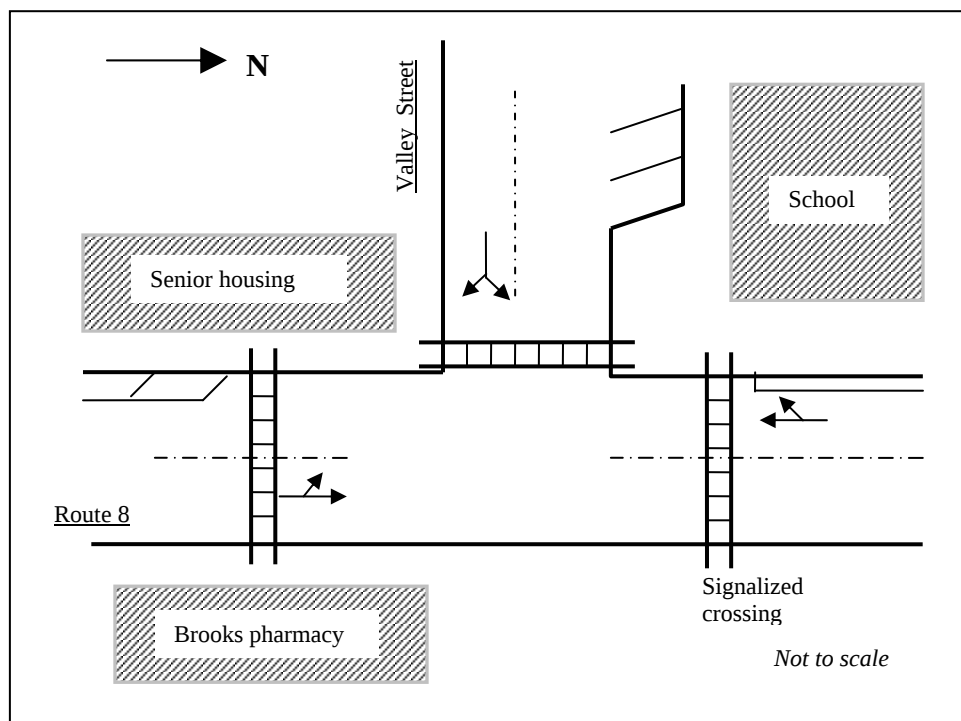
- The possibility of banning left turns from Depot Street onto Hoosac Street should be investigated.

3.5 Valley Street and Route 8

This is a three-way intersection located close to Adams Middle School. The minor street (i.e., Valley Street) is controlled by a stop sign. Valley Street provides access to the Middle School and several residential developments. There are three pedestrian crossings located close to the intersection: two are located on Route 8 and one of them is signalized, the third is located on Valley Street. In addition to the push button operated traffic signal, a traffic officer is also present before the start and after the closure of the school to ensure the safety of children using the main road pedestrian crossing. The speed limit on Route 8 in the vicinity of the school has been reduced from 25mph to 20mph.

3.5.1 Discussion

In general, this intersection is busiest during school opening and closing hours. The school related traffic and pedestrian movement somewhat impede through traffic on Route 8. However, these activities are limited to a few hours in the morning and afternoon. The presence of traffic officers and push-button operated pedestrian crossing should help to ensure safe and efficient functioning of the intersection. Since the traffic volume on Valley Street is low during other times of the day, this intersection does not experience any major traffic related problems.



Schematic representation of Route 8 and Valley Street intersection



Route 8 and Valley Street intersection

3.5.2 Recommendations

None

3.6 Friend Street, Renfrew Street and Route 8

This is a four-way intersection located in Adams. There is a stop sign on the Friend Street approach. Friend Street is an important secondary road in Adams that provides access to residential developments and a public park. The park, which is currently being renovated, is located close to the intersection. There are two pedestrian crossings located at this intersection: one is located on the south side of the intersection, the other is located on the west side of the intersection. A gas station is located on the southwest quadrant of the intersection; an automobile dealership is located on the northwest quadrant.

3.6.1 Issues

- Driveways to the auto dealership and the gas station are located in proximity to the intersection. These driveways increase conflicting traffic movements. Currently there are three driveways to the gas station (see Figure 4).
- The stop line on Renfrew Street is located somewhat away from the intersection. As a result, vehicles waiting on Renfrew Street to turn left or to enter Friend Street cannot see southbound vehicles on Route 8 (see Figure 5).
- On Friend Street, there are two stop lines: one before the pedestrian crossing and another after the pedestrian crossing (see Figure 6). When a vehicle is waiting between the front stop line and the pedestrian crossing, pedestrians using the crosswalk cannot see vehicles coming from Route 8 north and turning onto Friend Street. It should be noted that this crossing is used by children who visit the nearby park.

- Refer to traffic impact analysis section of the report for level of service analysis for this intersection.

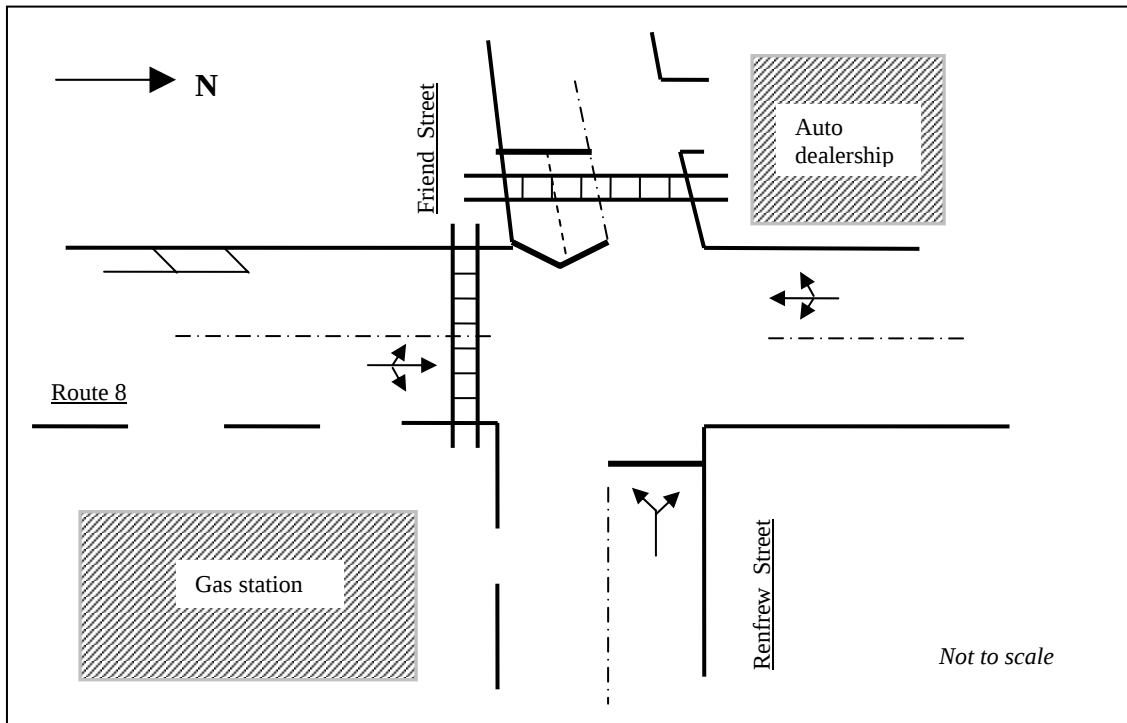


Figure 4: Schematic representation of Route 8, Friend Street and Renfrew Street intersection



Figure 5: Stop line on Renfrew Street



Figure 6: Stop lines and pedestrian crossing on Friend Street

3.6.2 Recommendations

- This study recommends the closure of the northmost driveway from Route 8 to the gas station. The closure of this driveway reduces conflicting vehicle movements at the intersection. There are two driveways to the auto dealership from Friend Street; the nearest driveway to the intersection should be closed. Entry and exit from the auto dealership can be provided by widening the second driveway, which is located further away from the intersection. The closure of the above-mentioned driveways should increase the safety of pedestrian crossings as well.
- To improve the sight distance for traffic on the Renfrew Street approach, the stop line should be moved closer to the intersection.
- To improve safety for pedestrians using the crossing on Friend Street, the front stop line should be eliminated and the pedestrian crossing and the rear stop line moved closer to the intersection. If necessary, the approach lanes on Friend Street should be widened to accommodate two lanes (one for left turns and through traffic, other for right turns and through traffic) after relocating the stop line.

3.7 Lime Street and Route 8

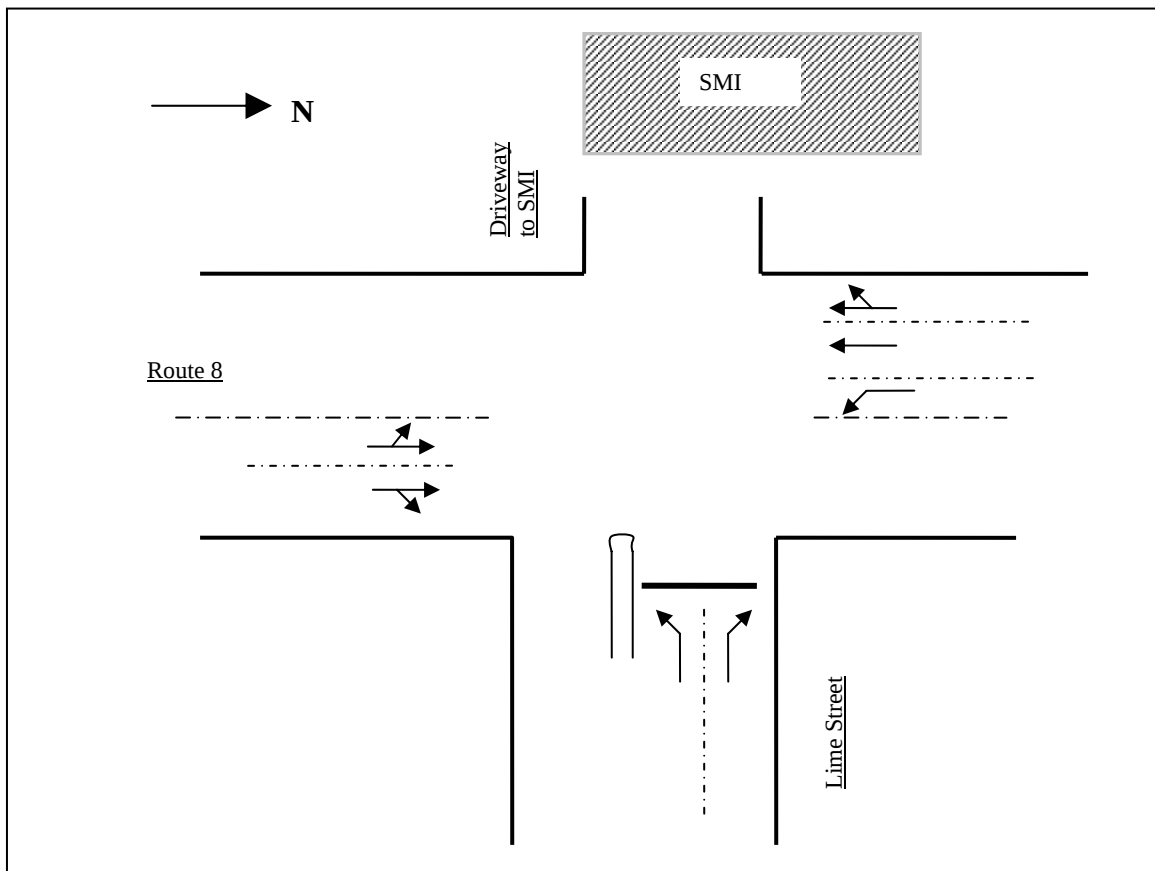
This is a three-way intersection (with a driveway to SMI) located in Adams. A stop sign controls traffic entering from Lime Street. Route 8 is divided by a wide painted median. It has two lanes on both approaches and a separate left turn lane on the southbound approach. Lime Street has one lane each direction. At Lime Street's intersection with Route 8, there two lanes: one left turn lane and one right turn lane.

3.7.1 Discussion

There are several driveways to SMI, which is located close to the intersection on the west side of Route 8. As a result, there is potential for conflicting traffic movements in the vicinity of the intersection. In general, this intersection experiences relatively modest traffic volume. Please refer to traffic impact analysis section for more details.

3.7.2 Recommendations

None.



Schematic representation of Route 8 and Lime Street intersection

4.0 PARKING

In North Adams, where the development along the corridor is lighter than in Adams, there are no on-street parking facilities. However, there are several off-street parking facilities on commercial properties in North Adams. In Adams, on-street parking is available on both sides of Route 8 between Maple Street and Hoosac Street. The Town of Adams has installed parking meters in this section, and charges 25 cents per hour of parking. Parking is allowed only on the west side of Route 8 from Hoosac Street to Friend Street. There are no on-street parking spaces north of Friend Street.

4.1 Discussion

In North Adams, the absence of on-street parking does not appear to be a significant issue because most of the major developments are located sufficiently away from the main road and provide ample off-street parking on site. When the existing major off-street parking facilities are considered, North Adams Plaza's parking facility appears to be under-utilized during the daytime due to high rental vacancy rate (see Figure 7). However, the present assessment of the parking situation may significantly change depending on the type of future redevelopment of the North Adams Plaza property. In general, a shopping center would require more parking spaces than an industrial development of similar magnitude (or similar number of employees). The leasable floor area of the land parcel is approximately 107,000 square feet. Assuming that the future development would be a shopping center, the required number of parking spaces per 1,000 gross leasable floor area ranges from 3.25 to 4 (Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation Manual -1987). The lower number refers to weekday requirement and the higher number refers to Saturday requirement. Hence, the total number of required parking spaces for the new facility would be between 350- 425 (Note: The numbers of existing parking spaces are unknown). At present, ITE is in the process of updating the Parking Generation Manual. Therefore, the estimations presented in this analysis might differ from the current parking requirement rates.

Off-street parking spaces in Adams are very limited. This is mainly because of the dense land development in the downtown. However, this study did not assess the adequacy of available parking spaces.

4.2 Recommendations

None.



Figure 7: North Adams Plaza's off-street parking facility

5.0 FACILITIES FOR PEDESTRIANS

Sidewalks and crosswalks are present from Hoosac Street to Friend Street. However, sidewalks are available only on the west side of Route 8 between Friend Street and Lime Street, and only on the east side from Lime Street to North Adams town line. There are no sidewalks along the divided segment of Route 8 in North Adams. The most notable pedestrian facility is the signalized crossing in front of Adams Middle School (see Figure 8). Since this crossing is located at Valley Street and Route 8 intersection, its functioning is discussed in greater detail under “intersections” of the report. There is a pedestrian crossing on Route 8 in front of the ‘seniors’ housing complex located south of Valley Street. It is frequently used by seniors to access Brooks Pharmacy, which is located directly across the street from the seniors’ housing complex.

5.1 Issues

This study found that the pedestrian crossing in front of the seniors’ housing complex is not very noticeable to drivers because of the on-street parking on Route 8. This is a potential safety hazard. Moreover, this study noticed that some of the sidewalks were unusable during the winter months because of the non-removal of snow.

5.2 Recommendations

- This study suggests stamped asphalt (to make it look like a brick paved crossing) and installing push button operated flashing lights on the crosswalk in front of the seniors’ housing complex for the extra safety of pedestrians.

- This study suggests that the town of Adams remove snow from pedestrian walkways on a more regular basis. The properly maintained sidewalks would make the Town of Adams more pedestrian friendly during winter months.



Figure 8: Signalized pedestrian crossing in front of Adams Middle School

6.0 FACILITIES FOR BICYCLISTS

BRPC performed a detailed analysis to identify roads where the demand for bicycling is high and to evaluate the safety for cyclists on those roads (Berkshire Bicycling and Walking Plan, 2003). This report states the level of service (LOS) for bicycling on Route 8 corridor within the study section as ranging from moderately low (LOS D) to moderately high (LOS C). The LOS is a qualitative measure of comfort/ convenience and freedom to maneuver for bicyclists on a road. The scale of LOS ranges from extremely compatible (LOS A) to extremely incompatible (LOS F). The BRPC report identifies the road section of Route 8 between Harding Avenue and Cook Street, going by the Adams Middle School and in the proximity of a dense residential development as a potentially high demand corridor for bicycling.

6.1 Issues

There are several deterrents for bicycling in the corridor between Harding Avenue and Cook Street: high traffic volume, speeding by motorists despite the 25 mph speed limit, and a bus stop located in this segment. In other areas, the lack of paved shoulder and the presence of on-street parking spaces make it unsafe for bicyclists.

6.2 Recommendations

The northward extension of the Ashuwillticook multi-use trail, which currently ends near Hoosac Street, should provide an alternative and a safe facility for bicyclists. In addition, bicycle access trails from the Ashuwillticook trail to the trip generators such as Adams Middle School should be provided.

7.0 TRAFFIC SAFETY

The data provided by the Adams Police Department was used to analyze accidents on the Route 8 corridor. To analyze intersections, the accident data published by the Massachusetts Highway Department was used.

7.1 Corridor Analysis

The Adams Police Department provided details of reported accidents on Route 8 from Hoosac Street to the North Adams town line during past three years. As shown in Table 2, a total of 167 accidents have occurred from January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2003. Two accidents have resulted in fatalities, and 67 accidents have resulted in personal injuries. Route 8 has two lanes from Hoosac Street to Lime Street and four lanes from there on. The majority of accidents have occurred on the two-lane segment. However, 50% of the accidents that occurred on the four-lane segment have resulted in injuries. The corresponding percentage of injury accidents on the two-lane segment is 37%.

Table 2: Accidents on Route 8 in Adams

Section	Total accidents	Fatal	Injury	Pedestrian	Bicycle
Hoosac Street – Lime Street	116	1	42	1	1
Lime Street – North Adams T.L.	51	1	25	0	0

Source: Adams Police Department (January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2003)

7.1.1 Issues

The Adams Police Department officials mentioned that speeding and the lack of left turn lanes contributed to many accidents reported on the road section between Brown Street and North Adams town line. In the absence of left turn lanes, these vehicles have to wait on the inner lane (i.e., fast lane). As a result, several rear end and side-swipe accidents (vehicles changing lanes) have occurred in the past. In the two-lane segment, lack of opportunities for passing, congestion, and high density roadside developments/driveways may have contributed to accidents.

7.1.2 Recommendations

The road section of Route 8 between Brown Street and North Adams town line would be better served by a two-way left turn lane. Such a lane could accommodate vehicles turning left from Route 8 as well as vehicles entering onto Route 8 from driveways and wanting to turn left. If it is difficult to introduce a two-way left turn lane, then the feasibility of introducing left turn bays on Route 8 for selected intersections and driveways should be considered (e.g., Brown Street, Apremont Street, and Newark Street).

7.2 Speeding

A 48-hour speed study performed by BRPC in 2002 revealed that 75% of vehicles passing downtown Adams via Route 8 travel between 26 mph and 35 mph. (Note: 2002 AADT on Route 8 in downtown Adams was 18,350). This speed range exceeds the speed limit within downtown Adams, which is 25 mph (20 mph in the vicinity of Adams Middle School). The Adams Police Department provided details of violation tickets it issued to drivers for speeding during the last three years. This data is presented in Table 3. In general, the number of tickets issued for speeding does not appear to correlate with BRPC's finding that 75% of the vehicles exceed the posted speed limit.

Table3: Speeding tickets issued from 01/01/2001 to 12/31/2003

Section	Tickets
Hoosac Street – Lime Street	53
Lime Street – North Adams T.L.	47

Source: Adams Police Department

7.2.1 Recommendations

Increased efforts to curb speeding in downtown Adams corridor are necessary since a middle school, a senior housing complex, and a number of pedestrian crossings are located in downtown Adams.

7.3 Intersection Accidents

The details of intersection accidents published by MassHighway from 1998 to 2002 were analyzed. Table 4 lists intersections along Route 8 where five or more accidents have occurred. It should be noted that the accuracy of the accident data was not independently verified and the comments/conclusions made in this report are based on the assumption that the available data is accurate.

Table 4: Intersection accidents from 01/01/2001 to 12/31/2002

Intersection	Total accidents	Injury accidents	Collision manner		Pedestrian accidents
			Rear end	Angle	
Route 8/ Hodges Cross Road	22	9	14	3	0
Route 8/ Furnace Street	9	5	7	0	0
Route 8/ Hoosac Street	16	9	9	4	1
Route 8/Friend Street/Renfrew St.	5	0	1	2	0
Route 8/ Valley Street	8	3	6	0	0
Total	60	26	37	9	1

Source: Massachusetts Highway Department

7.3.1 Analysis

Hodges Cross Road/Route 8 and Hoosac Street/Route 8 intersections have reported the highest number of accidents. Hoosac Street/Route 8 functions as a stop-sign controlled intersection (but stop sign was not present). Hodges Cross Road/Route 8 is a signalized intersection. The patterns of accidents at those two intersections were visualized by generating collision diagrams. These diagrams are presented in Appendix 2.

In general, rear-end accidents are the predominant pattern at both intersections. At Hoosac Street/Route 8 intersection, the adequacy of sight distance for vehicles entering the intersection from Hoosac Street needs to be determined. After analyzing accident patterns, probable causes and general countermeasures were identified (see Table 5). The most appropriate countermeasure(s) should be selected after conducting further field studies, data analyses, and in reference to Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Table 5: Intersection accident patterns and general countermeasures

Intersection	Accident pattern	Probable cause	General countermeasures
Route 8 and Hoosac Street	Rear end	Driver not aware of intersection	Install/ improve warning signs Install overhead flashing beacon
		Large volume of turning vehicles	Increase curb radii
		Pedestrians crossing	Improve crosswalk markings
		Slippery surface	Overlay pavement (friction course)
Route 8 and Hodges Cross Road	Right angle	Inadequate traffic signal timing	- Adjust yellow interval - Provide all-red clearance - Adjust phase times and cycle times
		Slippery surface	- Reduce speed limit on approaches - Overlay pavement (friction course)
	Rear end	Inadequate traffic signal timing	Refer to countermeasures listed under right angle accidents

Source: Missouri Highway and Transportation Department 1990

7.4 Other Safety Issues

- In general, the signage in the road segment is adequate. However, due to snow plowing operations in winter, pavement markings wear out rapidly.
- Another potential safety hazard is the abrupt change in land use on the north approach to the downtown. At present, there are no visual cues to indicate to drivers the transition from industrial land use segment north of Friend Street to residential development between Friend Street and Columbia Terrace and then to the pedestrian-frequented downtown. This is a possible reason for vehicles exceeding posted speed limits.

7.4.1 Recommendations

- This study recommends repainting of markings on a more consistent basis to provide better guidance for drivers.
- This study recommends placing gateway elements north of Friend Street to indicate the transition from industrial land use to residential land use. Planting of trees on the roadside to visually reduce the width of roadway and installation of welcome signs are some suggestions.

7.5 Truck traffic at Specialty Mineral Incorporated (SMI)

This study investigated safety implications of temporary closure of Route 8 for truck traffic in front of SMI. The Adams Police Department mentioned that two police officers assist in stopping main road traffic when trucks transport minerals from excavation sites to sedimentation tanks. Generally SMI transports minerals four times a year during the

daytime and police officers are present during those times. There have been no reported accidents during past three years as a result of stoppage of main road traffic for mineral transport.

7.5.1 Recommendations

When the high speed operation of traffic on Route 8 and the resulting safety risks for human traffic controllers are considered, it would be more efficient if traffic signals are used to stop traffic on Route 8. Such signals would be activated only during periods of mineral transportation.

8.0 IMPACT OF LAND USE ON ROUTE 8

In North Adams, the land use along Route 8 is mainly commercial and industrial. These developments are not directly abutting Route 8. Therefore, access is generally provided via secondary roads.

In Adams, the land along Route 8 from Hoosac Street to Columbia Terrace has been fully developed for commercial and institutional usage. On the west side of Route 8 between Columbia Terrace and Friend Street, there are very dense residential developments; the east side of the same segment is moderately developed and the developments are mainly residential and commercial. Apart from Specialty Mineral Incorporated (SMI), presently there are limited roadside developments from Friend Street to Brown Street. The land-use between Brown Street and North Adams town line is mixed-use consisting of industrial, residential, and commercial developments.

The issues related to present land use are discussed in section 8.1. The build-out analysis (section 8.2) briefly explains the process used to identify developable land. Section 9 presents results of a traffic impacts analysis, which was performed by Clough, Harbour & Associates.

8.1 Issues

There are few vacant land parcels available on the east side of Route 8 between Columbia Terrace and Friend Street. If these land parcels were to be developed, it would result in more driveways connecting to Route 8. It should be noted that the west side of this road section has already been developed and any new driveways in this segment would result in more traffic conflicts.

The presence of SMI may deter any residential or commercial developments in the immediate neighborhood; however, industrial developments are likely. There are limited numbers of vacant land parcels between Brown Street and the North Adams town line that anticipate development in the near future. The access to most of the existing developments between Brown Street and North Adams town line is provided through private driveways that connect to Route 8 (i.e., there are no frontage roads).

8.1.2 Recommendations

- The vacant land between Columbia Terrace and Friend Street should be considered either for outright acquisition and preservation or for gaining access rights. This recommendation is made to prevent any adverse impacts that may result from adding new driveways onto a heavily developed section of the Route 8 corridor.
- The access to any new development on the east side of Route 8 between Renfrew Street and Lime Street should be provided via secondary streets; the access to any new developments in North Adams should be provided via frontage roads or secondary streets. These recommendations are made to prevent any new direct driveways onto private properties from Route 8.
- The feasibility of adding either a two-way left turn lane or left-turn bays onto the road segment between Brown Street and North Adams town line should be considered. This recommendation was discussed under “traffic safety”.



Driveway located close to Route 8 and Friend Street intersection

8.2 Build-out Analysis

Developable land area was determined for two types of parcels: presently developed land where further development is possible, and presently vacant parcels. This assessment took into account the following constraints considered prohibitive to development: slopes greater than 15%, and the existence of wetlands and floodplains. Geographic Information Systems was used to estimate land areas. When the maximum build-out of parcels was determined, the trends of land use between 1985 and 1999 were taken into consideration.

Further information about land use and economic analysis is presented in the “economic development” section of the report. The identified developable land, acreage, and anticipated trip generations from these parcels are summarized in Table 6 (reproduced from consultant’s report). The last two columns distribute total trips as entering and leaving the development.

Table 6: Developable land and trip generation estimates

Parcel ID	Size (1,000 SF)	Future land use code	Total PM trips	Enter	Exit
City of North Adams					
15-01	164.3	150	97	24	73
15-03	8.7	820	125	60	65
15-03A	9.7	150	10	3	7
15-04	18.7	150	17	4	13
15-05	4.5	820	81	39	42
15-08	85.8	310	89	47	42
15-12	12.2	140	9	3	6
15-09A	1.2	934	42	22	20
15-09C	3.8	437	13	5	8
15-09F	14.5	932	158	96	62
15-10E	3.4	933	88	45	43
15-13	5.6	812	22	10	12
15-13A	0.8	210	2	1	1
Town of Adams					
102-36	1.7	820	43	21	22
102-35	8.2	820	120	58	62
102-23	1.3	710	80	14	66
101-8	2.4	936	27	18	9
102-18.1	1.4	944	72	36	36
102-18.2	3.0	820	62	30	32
102-26	6.1	140	5	2	3
103-4	4.7	140	4	1	3
103-5	9.4	820	132	63	69
103-8	48.4	140	36	13	23
103-14	1.2	820	33	16	17
104-12	2.0	934	69	36	33
104-11	2.1	710	81	14	67
104-13	2.6	933	68	35	33
104-15	2.7	820	58	28	30
104-16	9.6	733	27	8	19

9.0 TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

Clough, Harbour & Associates LLP (CHA) performed the traffic impact analysis. The necessary data for the analysis was provided by BRPC. The purpose of the analysis was to assess the traffic operations of intersections and of the corridor and to identify areas for improvement for the existing condition and for the future condition (i.e., in 10-years time when the anticipated land developments have taken place). The consultant's report is attached in Appendix 3. This section presents a summary of the findings of the analysis.

9.1 Intersection Level of Service (LOS)

Table 7 summarizes results of the intersection analysis for existing and future conditions. The input data for the analysis corresponds to the worst traffic flow hour at the intersection on a normal day, which is the afternoon peak hour. LOS is presented in a scale of A to F, and is based on the stopped delay experienced by different vehicular movements at an intersection (e.g., left turns from a certain road). The most desirable scenario is LOS A, which represents little or no delay. LOS F indicates unacceptable delays and long queues. Realistically, in urban areas, LOS C or above is considered desirable and LOS D is acceptable. Please note that at stop sign controlled intersections, through vehicles experience no delays as these vehicles get the right-of-way.

Currently, the signalized intersections operate at overall level of service "A", which indicates low vehicle delay during peak traffic flow hours. Even after the anticipated developments take place (by 2014), the existing geometric and traffic control measures at the signalized intersections will be adequate to accommodate future traffic.

At stop sign controlled intersections, left-turn movements from side streets to enter Route 8 experience unacceptable delays (LOS "F"). In the future, this situation will further worsen with the increase in traffic volumes. These conditions will also make accessibility in the corridor difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists. Therefore, traffic signals may become warranted at intersections presently controlled by stop signs.

Table 7: Summary of Level of Service

Intersection & Approach	Control	Existing condition (2004)	Future condition (2014)
Route 8 & Hoosac Street			
Westbound (left turn from Hoosac St)	Stop sign	F	F
Westbound (right turn from Hoosac St)		C	F
Southbound (left turn from Route 8)		A	B
Route 8/ Friend St./ Renfrew St.			
Eastbound (Friend St)	Stop sign	F	F
Westbound (Renfrew St)		D	F
Northbound (left turns from Route 8)		A	A
Southbound (left turns from Route 8)		A	A
Route 8/ Lime St/ SMI Driveway			
Eastbound (SMI Driveway)	Stop sign	C	F
Westbound (left turn from Lime St)		E	F
Westbound (right turn from Lime St)		B	C
Northbound (left turn from Route 8)		A	A
Southbound (left turn from Route 8)		A	B
Route 8/ Hardman/ N Adams Plaza			
Eastbound (N Adams Plaza)	Signal	C	C
Westbound (Hardman)		C	C
Northbound (Route 8)		A	A
Southbound (Route 8)		A	B
Overall intersection		A	A
Route 8/ Hodges Cross/Jug handle			
Eastbound (Jug handle)	Signal	B	B
Westbound (Hodges Cross Rd)		B	C
Northbound (Route 8)		A	B
Southbound (Route 8)		A	B
Overall intersection		A	B

9.2 Roadway Level of Service

At present, the capacity of Route 8 seems adequate. However, as seen from build-out analysis (2014), more vehicles are expected to use Route 8 in the next 10 years. In 2014, directional traffic volume is expected to exceed 1,100 vehicles during PM peak hour. This increase in traffic is bound to increase congestion and reduce travel speed on the two-lane section of Route 8. The traffic study identified following mitigation measures:

- Prevent direct access to Route 8 (access management),
- Improve transit services, and
- Widen two-lane road into a four-lane road.

10.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Route 8 is the only major north-south access road, which serves Adams and North Adams. Therefore, preservation of capacity and level of service on Route 8 is important in light of anticipated development along the corridor. This report presented an evaluation of traffic and land development impacts on the Route 8 corridor from Hoosac Street in Adams to Hodges Cross Road in North Adams. A summary of the findings of the study is presented separately for the Adams and North Adams sections of the Route 8 corridor.

10.1 North Adams

10.1.1 Intersections

This study evaluated three intersections along Route 8 in North Adams. Furnace Street/Route 8 is controlled by a stop sign and other intersections are controlled by traffic signals.

North Adams Plaza/Hardman Industrial Parkway & Route 8

- Traffic analysis shows both present and future level of service of this intersection as “A”. Therefore, this intersection is expected to function satisfactorily after anticipated developments take place, which include the proposed redevelopment of North Adams Plaza.

Hodges Cross Road/Jug handle & Route 8

- This intersection is expected to function satisfactorily in the future without any improvement measures. The present level of service (LOS) is “A” and the future LOS is expected to be “B”, which represents very satisfactory functioning of the intersection.

Furnace Street and Route 8

- This intersection is located outside the original study area, and hence, a limited analysis was performed. Presently, this intersection appears to function satisfactorily, except during peak hours when vehicles entering Route 8 from Furnace Street experience some delays.
- The capacity of Furnace Street is limited and increasing capacity of this road is very difficult because of the steep slope and roadside developments. Therefore, this road (and intersection) is not expected to perform satisfactorily if traffic volumes increase in the future.

10.1.2 Capacity of Route 8

- Since Route 8 has four lanes in North Adams (within the study area), no capacity enhancements are expected in the immediate future. However, implementation of access management measures such as the prevention of direct access from Route 8 to new developments is recommended to preserve the capacity for an extended duration.

10.1.3 Parking facilities

- An approximate analysis of number of parking spaces required for the proposed super market in the existing North Adams Plaza premises was performed. Assuming 107,000 square feet leasable floor area, about 425 parking spaces would be required for the new facility.

10.1.4 Traffic safety

- The Hodges Cross Road/Route 8 intersection experienced a total 22 accidents from 1998 to 2002. The majority of these were rear-end accidents. A probable cause for rear-end accidents is inadequate traffic signal timing. Therefore, further investigation of traffic signal timing and phasing plan is recommended.

10.1.5 Land use and transport

- The access to any new development in North Adams should be provided via frontage roads or secondary streets. These recommendations are made to prevent new direct driveways onto private properties from Route 8, which is a four-lane road.
- Driveways on secondary streets should be at a safe distance from the intersections with Route 8.

10.2 Adams

10.2.1 Intersections

This study evaluated three intersections along Route 8 in Adams. These intersections are controlled by Stop-signs.

Hoosac and Route 8

- At present, during afternoon peak hour, vehicles turning left from Hoosac Street onto Route 8 experience unacceptable delays (LOS “F”). This situation will further worsen with the obvious increase in future traffic volumes. Therefore, traffic signals may become warranted at this intersection.
- The possibility of prohibition of trucks entering onto Route 8 from Hoosac Street should be investigated.
- The possibility of banning left turns from Depot Street onto Hoosac Street should be investigated.

Friend and Route 8

This intersection is located in close to a gas station and an auto dealership.

- At present, during the afternoon peak hour, vehicles entering Route 8 from Friend Street experience LOS “F”; vehicles entering Route 8 from Renfrew Street experience LOS “D”. While this situation is already unacceptable, in the future, the LOS of both approaches will deteriorate to “F”. Therefore, traffic signals may become warranted at this intersection.

- This study recommends the closure of the northmost driveway from Route 8 to the gas station. The closure of this driveway reduces conflicting vehicle movements at the intersection. Similarly, the possibility of closing the driveway to the auto dealership nearest the intersection should be considered. Access and egress can be provided by widening the second driveway, which is located further away from the intersection. The closure of the above-mentioned driveways also increases the safety of pedestrian crossings.
- To improve the sight distance for traffic on the Renfrew Street approach, the stop line should be moved closer to the intersection.
- To improve safety for pedestrians using the crossing on Friend Street, the front stop line should be eliminated and the pedestrian crossing and the rear stop line moved closer to the intersection. If necessary, the approach lanes on Friend Street should be widened to accommodate two lanes (one for left turns and through traffic, another for right turns and through traffic) after relocating the stop line.

Lime Street/SMI Driveway & Route 8

- The present peak hour performance of this intersection is somewhat acceptable in comparison to the two previously discussed intersections. However, in the future, traffic entering Route 8 from side roads will experience significant delays (LOS “F”). Therefore, traffic signals may become warranted at this intersection.

10.2.2 Capacity of Route 8

- To accommodate the anticipated growth in traffic, the two-lane segment of Route 8 would have to be widened to four lanes. Possible alternatives to road widening include managing direct access to Route 8 (e.g., service roads) and improving transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities.

10.2.3 Pedestrian facilities

- This study suggests stamped asphalt (to make it look like a brick paved crossing) and installing push button operated flashing lights on the crosswalk in front of the seniors’ housing complex on Route 8 for the extra safety of pedestrians.
- This study suggests that the town of Adams should remove snow from sidewalks on a more regular basis. The properly maintained sidewalks would make the town of Adams more pedestrian friendly during winter months.

10.2.4 Traffic safety

- Hoosac Street/Route 8 intersection reported 16 accidents from 1998 to 2002. The majority were rear-end accidents. Installation of over-head flashing beacons, improving crosswalk markings, and increasing curb radii are possible remedial actions. Future signalization of this intersection will contribute to reduce conflicts.
- The road section of Route 8 between Brown Street and the North Adams town line would be better served with a two-way left turn lane. Such a lane could accommodate vehicles turning left from Route 8 as well as vehicles entering Route 8 from driveways and wanting to turn left. If it is difficult to introduce a two-way left turn lane, then the feasibility of introducing left turn bays on Route 8

for selected driveways should be considered (e.g., Brown Street, Apremont Street, and Newark Street).

- Increased efforts to curb speeding in downtown Adams are necessary since a middle school, a senior housing complex, and a number of pedestrian crossings are located in downtown Adams.
- This study recommends repainting of road markings on a more consistent basis to provide better guidance for drivers.
- This study recommends placing gateway elements north of Friend Street to indicate the transition from industrial land use to residential land use. Planting of trees on roadside to visually reduce the width of the roadway and installation of welcome signs are some suggestions.
- When the high speed operation of traffic on Route 8 and the resulting safety risks for human traffic controllers are considered, it would be more efficient if traffic signals were used to stop traffic on Route 8. Such signals would be activated only during periods of mineral transportation.

10.2.5 Land use and transport

- The vacant land between Columbia Terrace and Friend Street should be considered either for outright acquisition and preservation or for purchasing access rights. This recommendation is made to prevent any adverse impacts that may result from adding new driveways (with the development of vacant land parcels) onto a heavily developed section of the Route 8 corridor.
- The access to any new developments on the east side of Route 8 between Renfrew Avenue and Lime Street should be provided via secondary streets. These recommendations are made to prevent any new direct driveways onto private properties from Route 8.

Appendix 1: Study Area

Appendix 2: Collision Diagrams

Indicate North
by Arrow



Intersection
Collision
Diagram

Hoosac Street
Street Name

Accident Summary			
Severity	Day	Night	Total
Fatal	0	0	0
Injury	8	1	9
PDD	5	2	7
Total	13	3	16

04/19/01 11AM
Clear, dry

12/17/99 2PM
Clear, dry

07/29/01 12PM
Cloudy, dry

02/18/01 12PM
Clear, dry

Columbia Street
Street Name

Symbols

- ← Moving Vehicle
- ←>> Backing Vehicle
- ←- Non-Involved Vehicle
- X- Pedestrian
- o- Bicycle
- ▢ Parked Vehicle
- ▢ Fixed Object
- Fatal Accident
- Injury Accident

Types of Collisions

- ←> Rear End
- ←> Head On
- ←> Side Swipe
- ←> Out of Control
- ←> Overtake
- ← Left Turn (turning vehicle not known)
- ← Left Turn
- ← Right Angle

Show For Each Accident

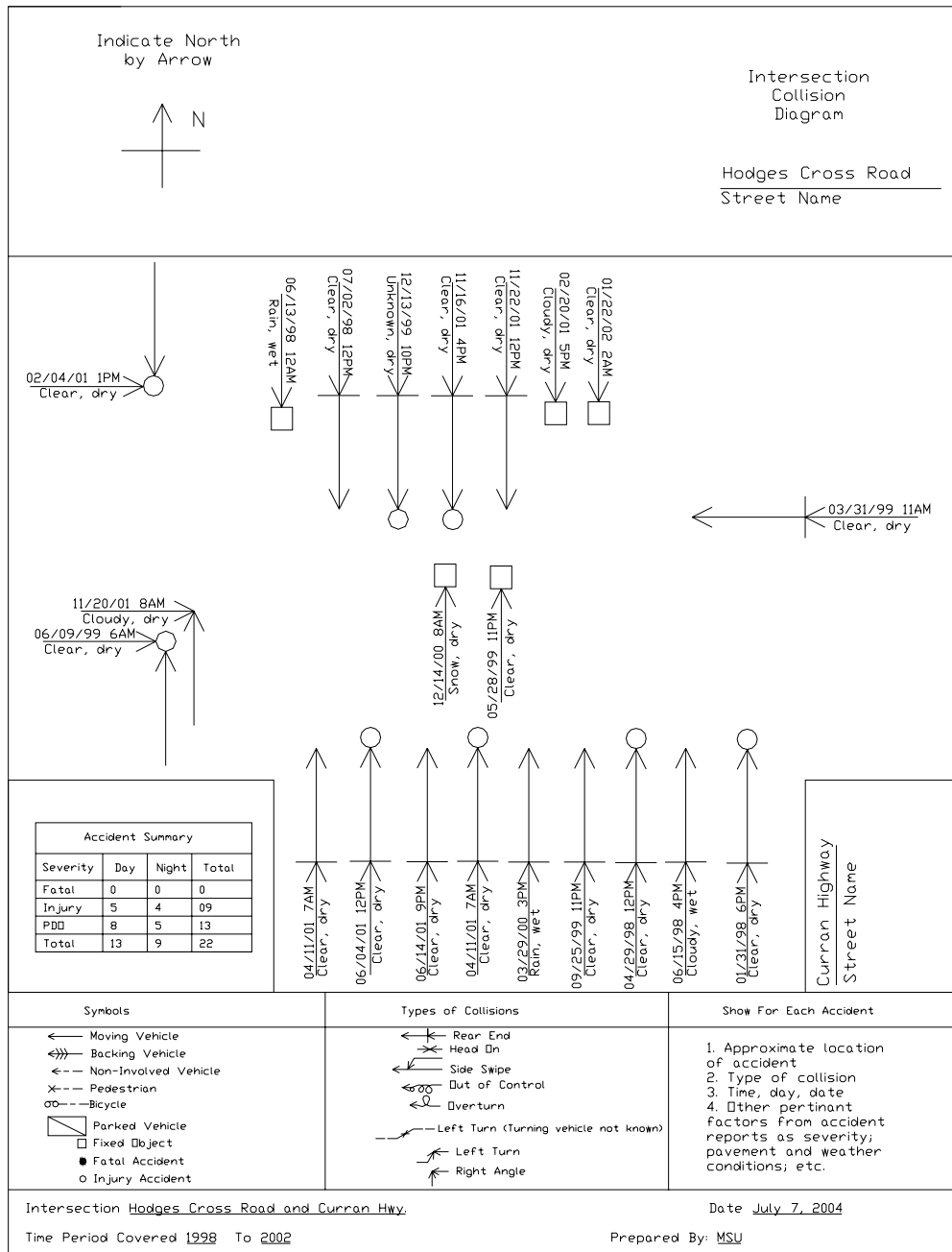
1. Approximate location of accident
2. Type of collision
3. Time, day, date
4. Other pertinent factors from accident reports as severity; pavement and weather conditions; etc.

Intersection Hoosac Street and Columbia Street

Time Period Covered 1998 To 2002

Date July 7, 2004

Prepared By: MSU

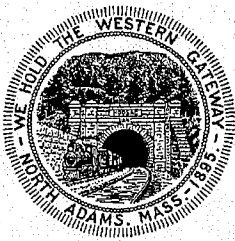


Appendix 3: Traffic Impact Analysis (Consultant's Report)

TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Route 8 Corridor

prepared for:



City of North Adams, Massachusetts
City Hall – 10 Main Street
North Adams, MA



Town of Adams, Massachusetts
Town Hall – 8 Park Street
Adams, MA

and

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
One Fenn Street, Suite 201
Pittsfield, MA

prepared by:

CLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES LLP
ENGINEERS, SURVEYORS, PLANNERS
& LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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CHA Project No. 12617.1003

June 2004

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Clough, Harbour & Associates (CHA) conducted a transportation study for the Town of Adams and City of North Adams, Massachusetts under the auspices of the State's Community Development Plan administered by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC). This study was conducted to address issues relating to the Route 8 corridor within the Town of Adams and City of North Adams. In particular, the study effort focused on the traffic operations of five intersections within the corridor for the 2004 existing year and the 2014 design year with possible future growth within the area.

The following intersections were included in the study:

- Route 8 & Hoosac Street
- Route 8 & Friend Street/Renfrew Street
- Route 8 & Lime Street/Specialty Minerals Inc. Driveway
- Route 8 & Harman Industrial Park/North Adams Plaza
- Route 8 & Hodges Cross Road/Route 8 Southbound Left-turn

In order to evaluate the existing conditions and identify areas/conditions for improvement, the following information was provided by BRPC for the study areas:

- Aerial Orthophotos
- Roadway Characteristics
- Intersection Characteristics
- Land Use and Size
- Traffic Volumes and Vehicle Classification
- Parking Conditions

2.0 ROADWAY CHARACTERISTICS

The BRPC provided the following general physical characteristics of the Route 8 corridor, including number of lanes, pavement width, speed limits, parking and other notable features. This data is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Route 8 Characteristics

Route 8	Link Distance	Pavement Width	Shoulder Width	Speed Limit	Features
From Hoosac St to Friend St/Renfrew St	.89 Miles	20-24'	0-4'	25/20/35	Sidewalks, On-street parking
From Friend St/Renfrew St to Lime St/SMI Driveway	.43 Miles	20'	0'	35	Sidewalks
From Lime St/SMI Driveway to Harman Industrial Park/N. Adams Plaza	1.11 Miles	42'	0-3'	35/40/45	Sidewalks
From Harman Industrial Park/N. Adams Plaza to Hodges Cross Rd/Route 8 SB left-turn	.42 Miles	48'	0-4'	45	Divided 8' median

The BRPC provided the following general physical characteristics of the roadways intersecting the Route 8 corridor, including number of lanes, pavement width, speed limits, traffic control, parking and other notable features. This data for the five study intersection roadways is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Route 8 Intersecting Roadway Characteristics

Route 8 Intersecting Roadway	Lanes on Approach	Pavement Width	Shoulder Width	Intersection Control	Features
Hoosac Street	2	33	0'	Stop on Hoosac St	Sidewalks, divided 4' median
Friend Street	1	26'	0'	Stop on Friend St	Sidewalks
Renfrew Street	1	26'	0'	Stop on Renfrew St	
Lime Street	2	33'	0'	Stop on Lime St	
Specialty Minerals Inc. Driveway	1	*16'	*0'	Stop on SMI	
Hardman Industrial Park	1	24'	0'	Signalized Intersection	Sidewalks
North Adams Plaza	2	40'	0'	Signalized Intersection	Divided 4' median
Hodges Cross Road	2	33'	5'	Signalized Intersection	Divided 4' median
Route 8 Southbound Left-turn	1	12'	0'	Signalized Intersection	

*Information not provided by BRPC

3.0 TRAFFIC VOLUMES

3.1 Existing Traffic Volumes

Turning movement counts, including vehicle classifications, were conducted in April of 2004 during the PM peak hour at the following study area intersections:

- Route 8 & Hoosac Street
- Route 8 & Friend Street/Renfrew Street
- Route 8 & Lime Street/Specialty Minerals Inc. Driveway
- Route 8 & Harman Industrial Park/North Adams Plaza
- Route 8 & Hodges Cross Road/Route 8 Southbound Left-turn

These counts were provided by the BRPC and the 2004 Existing PM peak hour volumes are shown on Figure 3.1.

3.2 Design Year Traffic Volumes

These 2004 existing volumes were grown using a 1.5% growth rate for 10 years to determine the 2014 design year traffic volumes. The design year and applied growth rate were provided by the BRPC. The 2014 PM peak hour volumes can be seen on Figure 3.2.

4.0 Potential Future Land Use

The BRPC identified various parcels within the City of North Adams and the Town of Adams that could have potential future growth. They also provided the size and potential future land use of these parcels. Based on this information, trip generation was estimated using ITE's 7th Edition Trip Generation Volumes 2 & 3. Table 3 shows the various parcels, size, land use, and estimated trips generated by each.

Table 3
Estimated Trip Generation

Parcel ID#	Size (1,000 SF)	Future Land Use Code	Total PM Trips	Enter	Exit
City of North Adams					
15-01	164.30	150	97	24	73
15-03	8.72	820	125	60	65
15-03A	9.70	150	10	3	7
15-04	18.68	150	17	4	13
15-05	4.53	820	81	39	42
15-08	85.81	310	89	47	42
15-12	12.16	140	9	3	6
15-09A	1.22	934	42	22	20
15-09C	3.75	437	13	5	8
15-09F	14.49	932	158	96	62
15-10E	3.36	933	88	45	43
15-13	5.59	812	22	10	12
15-13A	.78	210	2	1	1
Town of Adams					
102-36	1.73	820	43	21	22
102-35	8.15	820	120	58	62
103-23	1.25	710	80	14	66
101-8	2.40	936	27	18	9
102-18.1	1.41	944	72	36	36
102-18.2	3.03	820	62	30	32
102-26	6.06	140	5	2	3
103-4	4.70	140	4	1	3
103-5	9.41	820	132	63	69
103-8	48.40	140	36	13	23
103-14	1.15	820	33	16	17
104-12	1.99	934	69	36	33
104-11	2.09	710	81	14	67
104-13	2.61	933	68	35	33
104-15	2.72	820	58	28	30
104-16	9.62	733	27	8	19

Trip distribution was calculated based on the existing traffic patterns within the Route 8 corridor. The total trips generated by these future land uses are shown on Figure 4.1. These potential future trips were then added to the projected 2014 PM peak hour traffic volumes to create a 2014 PM Future condition. The 2014 PM Future traffic volumes can be seen on Figure 4.2.

5.0 TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

Level of Service (LOS) for signalized and unsignalized intersections as described in the *Highway Capacity Manual (2000)*, published by the Transportation Research Board, is defined in terms of average stopped delay. In urban areas, LOS C or above is considered desirable and LOS D is considered acceptable. LOS for an intersection is influenced by the traffic volumes entering the intersection, directional split of traffic, and intersection geometry. The LOS range for intersections, average stopped delays and characteristics are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 – LOS Delays and Characteristics			
LOS	AVG. STOPPED DELAY PER VEHICLE (SECONDS)		CHARACTERISTICS
	SIGNALIZED	UNSIGNALIZED	
A	≤ 10.0	≤ 10.0	Little or no delay. Most vehicles do not stop.
B	10.1 to 20.0	10.1 to 15.0	Short traffic delay. More vehicles stop than LOS A.
C	20.1 to 35.0	15.1 to 25.0	Average traffic delay. Number of vehicles stopping is significant.
D	35.1 to 55.0	25.1 to 35.0	Long traffic delays. Many vehicles stop. Individual cycle failure is noticeable.
E	55.1 to 80.0	35.1 to 50.0	Very long traffic delays. Poor progression. Individual cycle failure is frequent.
F	>80.0	>50.0	Delay is unacceptable to drivers. Demand volume exceed the capacity of the intersection.

Levels of service were determined using the capacity analysis procedures outlined in the *Highway Capacity Manual (2000)*, published by the Transportation Research Board, during PM peak hour. Capacity analyses were performed for 2004 Existing and 2014 Future Condition design years at the following intersections within the project limits:

- Route 8 & Hoosac Street
- Route 8 & Friend Street/Renfrew Street
- Route 8 & Lime Street/Specialty Minerals Inc. Driveway
- Route 8 & Harman Industrial Park/North Adams Plaza
- Route 8 & Hodges Cross Road/Route 8 Southbound Left-turn Jughandle

The Highway Capacity Software (HCS) used in this analysis calculates the delay experienced by each movement or lane approach. This delay is then assigned a LOS value from the table listed above. Signalized intersections will experience delay on every approach and have each lane movement calculated separately. Since all movements have calculated delays and assigned LOS values, an overall delay experienced for the entire intersection can be calculated. Unsignalized intersections experience

delay on all minor street movements and on left-turn movements from the major streets. Right-turn and through movements on the major street do not have any associated delay and therefore are not included in the calculations.

The LOS results of the capacity analyses are shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Level of Service Summary: PM Peak Hour

Intersection & Approach	Control	2004 Existing Condition		2014 Future Condition	
		LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay
Route 8 & Hoosac Street Westbound (Left Turn) Westbound (Right Turn) Southbound (Left Turn)	Stop Sign	F C A	67.0 19.8 3.7	F F B	1121.0 119.1 12.6
Route 8 & Friend Street/Renfrew Street Eastbound Westbound Northbound (Left Turn) Southbound (Left Turn)	Stop Sign	F D A A	117.7 34.3 1.0 0.4	F F A A	*** 467.7 2.8 1.4
Route 8 & Lime Street/SMI Driveway Eastbound Westbound (Left Turn) Westbound (Right Turn) Northbound (Left Turn) Southbound (Left Turn)	Stop Sign	C E B A A	20.8 39.1 11.3 0.0 9.5	F F C A B	389.4 *** 17.0 0.3 13.5
Route 8 & Harman Industrial/N. Adams Plaza Eastbound Westbound Northbound Southbound Overall	Signal	C C A A A	27.2 29.3 5.8 5.9 6.8	C C A B A	29.0 33.0 7.2 10.0 9.8
Route 8 & Hodges Cross Rd/Rt. 8 SB Left-turn Eastbound Westbound Northbound Southbound Overall	Signal	B B A A A	11.1 15.8 6.4 6.0 8.4	B C B B B	13.4 22.8 13.9 10.4 14.2

LOS = "Level of Service"

Delay = Average Control Delay (seconds per vehicle)

*** = The delay is incalculable based on the degree of over saturation

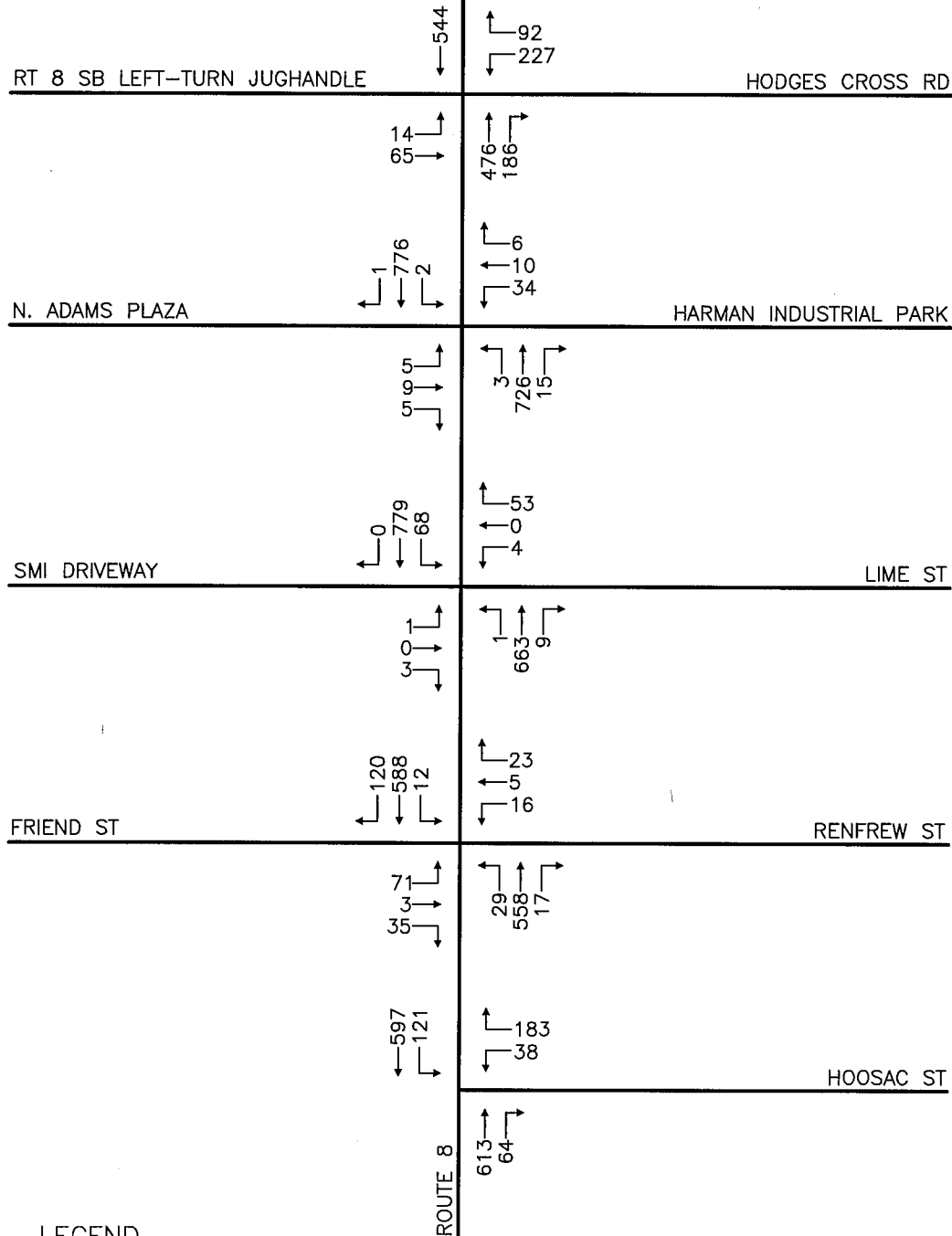
The capacity analyses of the intersections within the Route 8 corridor indicate that the basic infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate existing traffic demand. The signalized intersections operate at overall level of service "A", which indicates low levels of vehicle delay during peak hours. The analyses of the Stop-controlled intersections show that the left-turn movements from the side streets to enter Route 8 operate at level of service "E" and "F". These analyses reflect the limited frequency of simultaneous gaps in both directions of traffic on Route 8 to process the side street volume during the PM peak hour.

Analyses of the signalized intersection operations for the projected 10-year traffic volumes indicate that the existing geometry and traffic control at these locations will be sufficient to accommodate the future volumes. The overall level of service at these locations will be LOS "A" or "B". Directional volumes on Route 8 are projected to exceed 1,100 vehicles per hour during the peak hour. These volumes indicate that traffic flow along the two-lane section of Route 8 will become congested during peak hours. This congestion will further exacerbate the existing difficulty for traffic movement from the Stop-controlled side streets. The delay for this traffic is projected to increase significantly, as indicated in Table 5. These conditions will also make accessibility in the corridor difficult for pedestrians and bicyclist. Traffic signal control may become warranted at the intersections that are currently unsignalized as development occurs along the Route 8 corridor. Other improvement strategies to be considered to address long-range mobility in the corridor include applying access management concepts to limit direct property access to Route 8, provide secondary parallel access connections and provide facilities that support accessibility by other travel modes (i.e., pedestrian, bicycle and transit).

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The existing geometry and traffic control along the Route 8 corridor in the study area from Hoosac Street to Hodges Cross Road is generally sufficient to accommodate the peak hour traffic demand. However, vehicle delay can be substantial during the peak hours for traffic entering Route 8 from the Stop-controlled side streets. The projection of future traffic volumes based on estimated development in the project area over the next ten-years indicates a significant increase in volume along the corridor. The signalized intersections in the corridor have sufficient capacity to accommodate these future volumes.

However, operations along the two-lane section of Route 8 will become congested during peak hours with the projected level of traffic growth. One alternative to address this condition is to widen Route 8 to provide two travel lanes for each direction. Other alternatives that could be considered include implementing strategies to manage direct vehicular access to Route 8 and provide secondary parallel connections for local trip circulation. Traffic signal control should also be considered for the Stop-controlled intersections as warrant criteria and future detailed engineering study indicate. Facilities to support alternative transportation modes in the corridor, such as pedestrian, bicycle and transit, and programs to encourage ridesharing should also be promoted to reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicle trips.



ROUTE 8 CORRIDOR STUDY



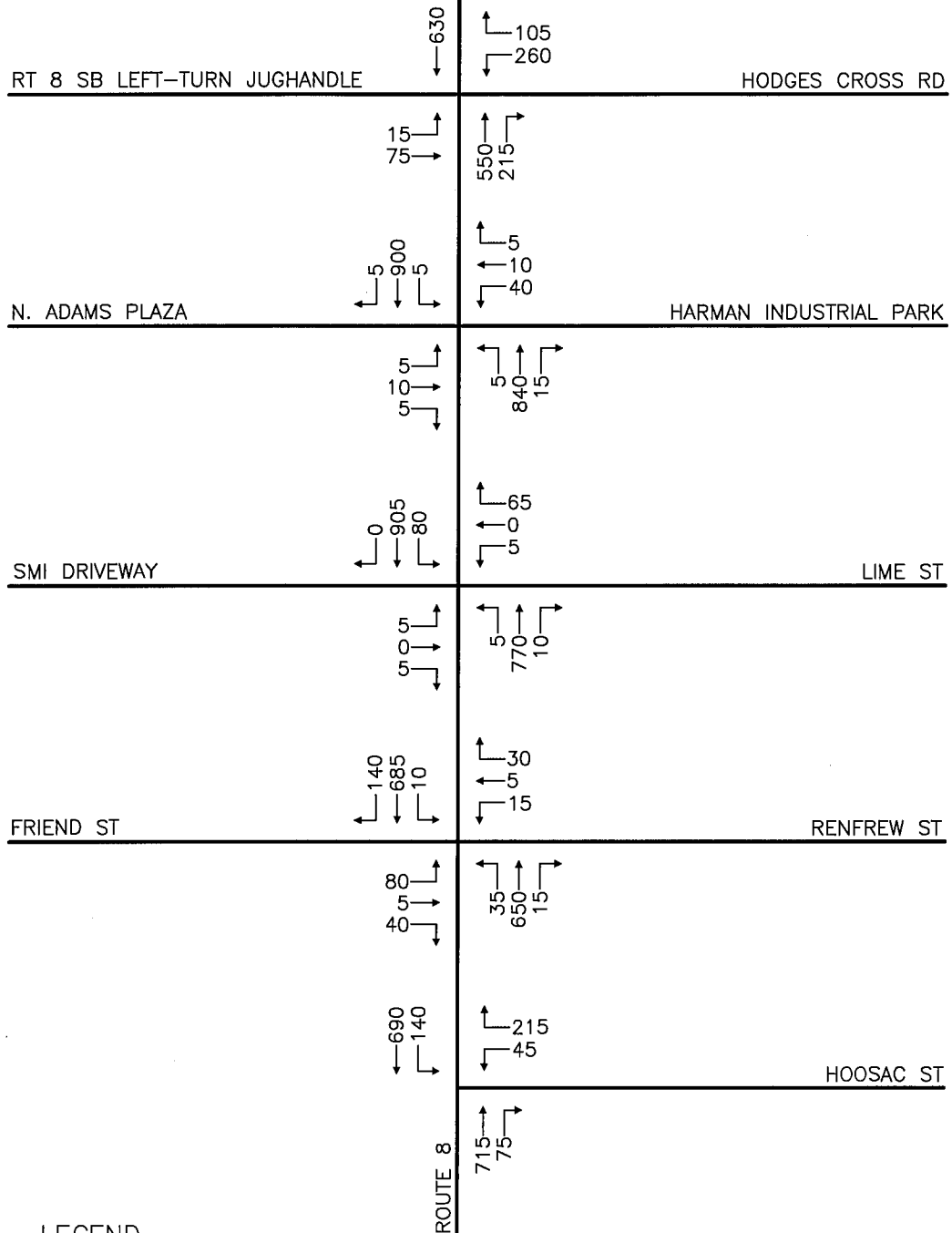
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& ASSOCIATES LLP**
ENGINEERS, SURVEYORS, PLANNERS
& LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
III WINNERS CIRCLE ALBANY, NY 12205

PROJ. NO: 12617

NOT TO SCALE

FIGURE 3.1

**2004 EXISTING CONDITION
PM PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUMES**



LEGEND

PM - XX

ROUTE 8 CORRIDOR STUDY

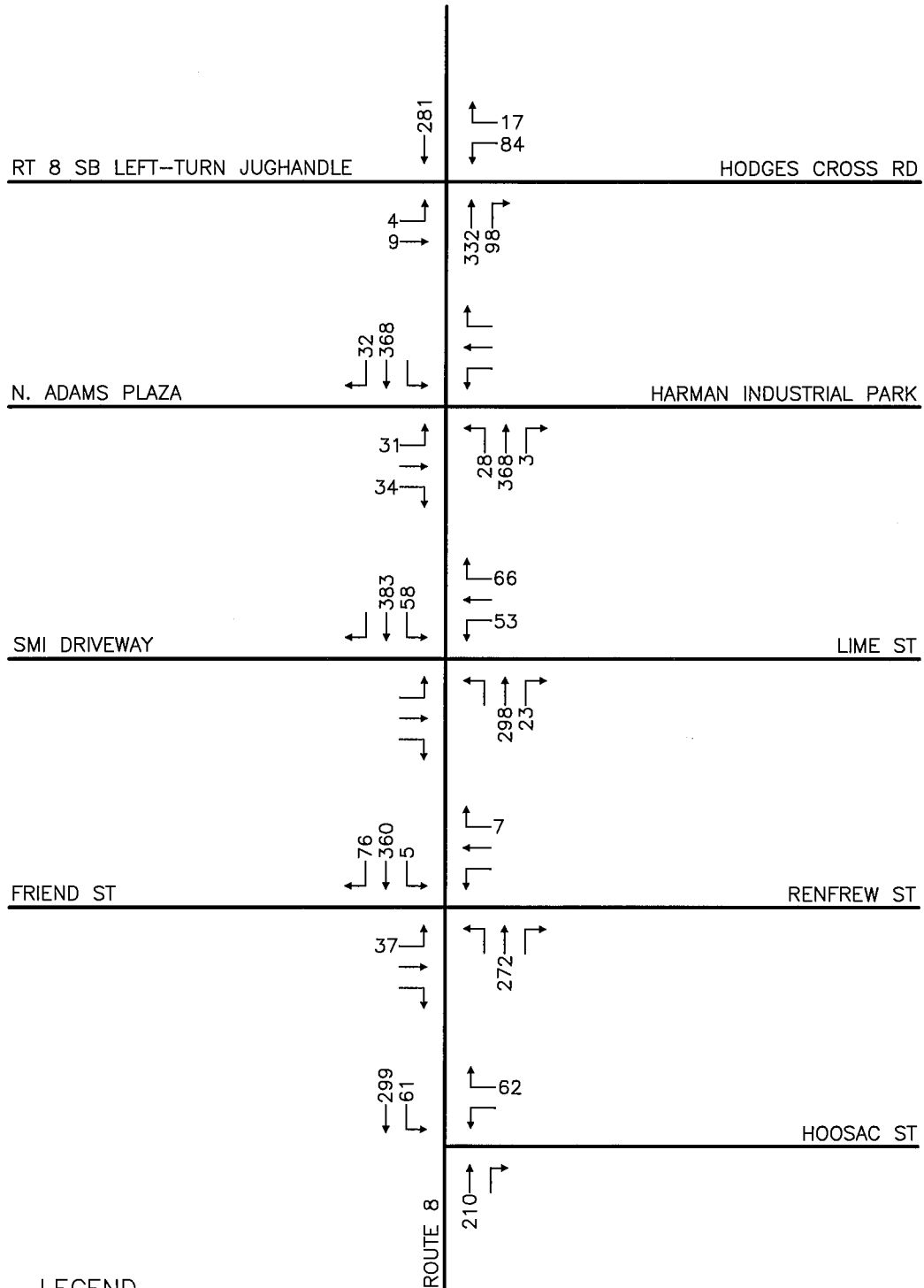


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FIGURE 3.2

**2014 DESIGN YEAR
PM PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUMES**



LEGEND

PM - XX

ROUTE 8 CORRIDOR STUDY

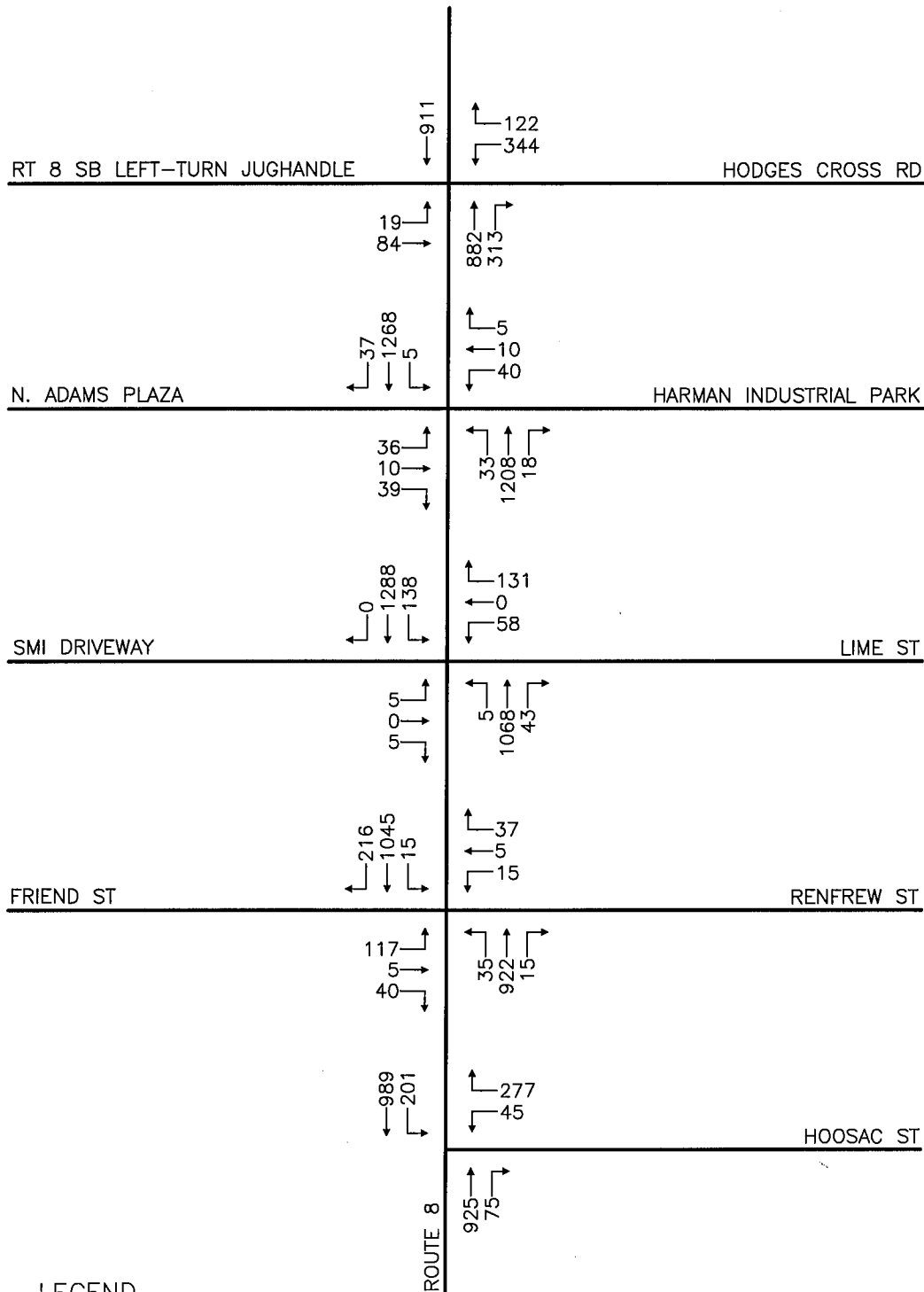


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FIGURE 4.1

POTENTIAL GENERATED TRIPS
PM PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUMES

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LEGEND

PM - XX

ROUTE 8 CORRIDOR STUDY



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FIGURE 4.2

**2014 FUTURE CONDITION
 PM PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUMES**

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



GIS Maps

Introduction to GIS Mapping

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are quickly becoming a staple of our times. Defined broadly, GIS is a computer-based system “for capture, retrieval, analysis, and display of spatial (locationally defined) data.” The essential elements in this definition for local governments are “spatial” and “analysis”: where are things, why do we want to know about them, and how can our community use this information to make better decisions?

GIS is a system of computer software, hardware, data, and personnel to help manipulate, analyze and present information that is tied to a specific location on the earth. Aspects of GIS include:

Spatial location – usually a geographic location

Information – visualization of analysis of data

System – linking software, hardware, data

Personnel –the key to the power of GIS

GIS applies modern computer graphics and database technology to the efficient, cost-effective management and planning of the local government’s assets. It provides enhanced capabilities for data storage, retrieval, and analysis. GIS does this by linking (1) maps and (2) databases. This marriage lets us easily explore the relationship between (1) location and (2) information.

The real key for small city governments is that GIS quickly integrates *information with location*. Through its use of computer technology, GIS provides a better, faster, easier way for local officials to find answers to questions and carry out analyses based on spatial relationships.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission uses GIS in projects covering almost all aspects of planning. This includes environmental, land use, community development, transportation, economic and housing projects. BRPC uses our GIS for map creation, data development and spatial analysis.

Throughout the Community Development Plan, GIS has been used to create a series of base maps illustrating what is in each community and has allowed community officials to determine where the most suitable locations are for various types of development / preservation. Some communities also used suitability maps to assist them in determine where the best locations for development / preservation were. These suitability maps were created by evaluating the importance of various environmental, housing, economic, and transportation items and plotting the best and worst locations based on the combination of all these factors. The final maps presented throughout the report show the decisions that were arrived at by the community. In this section, the base maps are presented as reference to show what is currently in the town. The descriptions of the mapped items that you will find within these base maps are listed below.

Introduction to Development Suitability Maps

Description of Map Attributes

Environmental Resources

Drinking Water

Aquifers – shows medium and high yield aquifers as delineated by USGS Water Resource Division. The original data is from the USGS 1:48,000 hydrologic atlas series on groundwater favorability.

Interim Wellhead Protection areas – shows the primary, protected area for PWS groundwater sources in the absence of an approved Zone II. The radius around the well is determined by the pumping rate in GPM of the well. Wellhead protection areas are important for protecting the recharge area around public water supply (PWS) wells.

Lakes/Ponds Resource Area – shows a 100 ft. buffer around the lakes and ponds that are on the USGS topographical maps. This buffer shows the area that has an immediate impact of the lakes and ponds.

Outstanding Resource Water – shows waters which constitute an outstanding resource as determined by their outstanding socioeconomic, recreational, ecological, and / or aesthetic values and which shall be protected and maintained as determined under Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards of 1995

Wellhead Protection Zone I – shows a 400 ft. buffer around public water supply points.

Wellhead Protection Area Zone II – shows the primary, protected area for PWS groundwater sources based upon the area of an aquifer which contributes to a well under the most severe pumping and recharge conditions that can realistically be anticipated. Wellhead protection areas are important for protecting the recharge area around public water supply (PWS) wells.

Water Bodies and Protection Areas

FEMA 100yr. Floodplain – shows areas of possible risk associated with flooding. This layer was created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) from the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM)

Lakes / Ponds Resource Areas – 100 ft - shows a 100-foot buffer around lakes and ponds that defines the resource area that contributes to the lake/pond. The lakes and ponds are derived from USGS topo maps.

River Protection Area – 200 ft. – Shows a 200-foot buffer delineating the resource area of perennial streams. These areas were created as an addition to the long-standing Wetlands Protection Act. The law establishes protected riverfront areas that extend 200 feet from the mean annual high-water line.

Surface Water Protection Area Zone A – shows land between the surface water source and the upper boundary of the bank, the land within a 400 foot lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of a Class A surface water source and the land within a 200 foot lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of a tributary or associated surface water body. These areas are included in the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations as Surface Water Supply Protection Zones.

Surface Water Protection Area Zone B – shows the land within one-half mile of the upper boundary of the bank of a Class A surface water source or the edge of the watershed, whichever is less. Zone B always included the land area within a 400 ft lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of the Class A surface water source. These areas are included in the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations as Surface Water Supply Protection Zones.

Wetland Resource Areas – shows a 100-foot buffer around wetlands that defines the resource area that contributes to the wetland. The wetlands are derived from USGS topographical maps.

Wetlands – shows wetlands derived from USGS topographical maps.

Soils / Geology

Excessively Drained Soils– shows soils that have too much or too rapid loss of water, either by percolation or by surface flow. The occurrence of internal free water is very rare or very deep. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

Highly Erodible Soils – shows soils that are highly susceptible to erosion from wind and/or water. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

Hydric Soils – Soils that are wet long enough to periodically produce anaerobic conditions, thereby influencing the growth of plants. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

Poorly Drained soils– shows soils that do not lose water very rapidly. The occurrence of free water is common. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

Scenic Landscapes – shows areas identified as having distinctive or noteworthy scenic landscapes as part of the Massachusetts Landscape Inventory Project, Department of Environmental Management, 1981.

Slopes Greater than 15% - shows slopes that are greater than 15% based on slope information derived from either 3 or 10-meter contours generated by MassGIS

Biological

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern – shows the location of areas that have been designated ACECs by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs. This designation requires greater environmental review of certain kinds of proposed development under state agency jurisdiction with the boundary.

Contiguous Natural Lands – shows large, contiguous tracts of natural land. “Contiguous” lands are defined to be at least 250 contiguous acres and “Natural” lands are defined based on the land use codes for water, forest, shrubland, pasture and wetland. The data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

Natural Land Riparian Corridors – shows contiguous natural lands within a 100-meter corridor encompassing perennial streams and river features. These areas within the riparian corridor remain in a “natural state”, potentially functioning as a corridor for select species movement, as well as additional ecological purposes. These data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

NHESP BioMap Core Habitat - Depicts the most viable habitat for rare species and natural communities. The polygons may consist of many individual species or natural communities.

NHESP BioMap Supporting Natural Landscapes – buffers and connects the Core Habitat polygons and identifies large, naturally vegetated blocks that are relatively free from the impact of roads and other development. The quality of undeveloped land considered in the landscape analysis was evaluated based on four major components: natural vegetation patch characteristics, size of relatively road less areas, sub watershed integrity, and contribution to buffering Bore Habitat for plants and exemplary communities.

NHESP Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife – shows estimations of the habitats of state-protected rare wildlife populations that occur in Resource areas. These habitats are based on rare species records maintained in the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program’s (NHESP) database.

NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species – shows areas that represent estimations of important state-listed rare species habitats in Massachusetts. These habitats are based in rare species population records maintained in the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program’s (NHESP) database.

Riparian Corridors – shows a 100-meter corridor, which encompasses perennial streams and river features. The 100 meter buffer distance is a subjective value derived from existing conservation plans, as well as current literature. The data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

Vernal Pools – shows a 100-foot buffer around NHESP Certified Vernal Pools. Certified Vernal Pools are protected if they fall under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act Regulations. They also are afforded protection under the state Water Quality Certification regulations, the state Title 5 regulations, and the Forest Cutting Practices Act regulations.

Community

Developed

Commercial Land – shows land that is classified as commercial in the most recent land use update.

Gravel Pits / Mining - shows land that is classified as Gravel / Mining in the most recent land use update.

Industrial Land – shows land that is classified as industrial in the most recent land use update. Industrial land is defined as Industrial, Mining, and Waste Disposal.

Multi-Family Residential - shows land that is classified as Multi-Family residential in the most recent land use update.

Residential Land – shows land that is classified as residential in the most recent land use update. Residential land is defined as lots smaller than ¼ acre lots, ¼ lots, lots larger than ½ acre, and multi-family lots.

State Registered Historic Resources – shows land that is listed with the State Register of Historic Places as being of historical interest.

Village / Commercial Centers – an area defined by the community as representing the village or community center.

Non-Developed Land

Agriculture Land – shows land classified as agriculture in the most recent land use update. Land that is defined as agriculture is composed of cropland, pasture, and woody perennial.

Agricultural Preservation Restriction Land – shows land that is permanently protected as agricultural land due to an APR designation

Buildable Land – shows land that was determined to be buildable based upon existing development, protection, and restricted land during the 1999/2000 Buildout Analysis

Forested Land – shows land that is classified as forest in the most recent land use update.

Non-Protected Open Space – shows land that is classified as open space, but is not permanently protected.

Partial Constraints – shows land that is buildable but is limited based on land characteristics, such as slope, wetlands, and proximity to water.

Protected Open Space – shows land that is classified as open space and is permanently protected.

Recreational Resources – shows land that is classified as recreational in the most recent land use update. Recreational land is defined as Participation Recreation, Spectator Recreation and Water based Recreation.

Housing and Population Densities

Owner Housing Density – The percentage of housing that is owned by the resident on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

Population Density - The population of the census block on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

Rental Housing Density - The percentage of housing that is rented by the resident on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

Seasonal Housing Density - The percentage of housing that is seasonal on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

Infrastructure

Roads

Dirt / Unpaved Roads – roads that are considered dirt or unpaved based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

Local Roads – roads that are considered local roads based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

Minor Roads – roads that are considered collectors based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

Major Roads / Highway Access – roads that are considered arterials or interstate on the latest MassHighway inventory.

Other Transportation

Para Transit – This data layer is only useful for regional analysis. A town that is a member of BRTA receives para transit

Transit access – roads that have existing BRTA bus service.

Rail Access – existing rail lines that are currently used.

Air Access – the area surrounding the airports that are considered part of the airport complex.

Bike Trails – the Ashuwillticook bike trail from Lanesborough/Pittsfield line to downtown Adams.

Utilities

Public Water – a line approximating the location of the public water lines. DPW staff verified this data during the summer of 2001.

Sewer – a line approximating the location of the sewer lines. The DPW staff verified this data during summer of 2001.

Solid Waste Facilities – Compiled by DEP to track the locations of landfills, transfer stations, and combustion facilities.

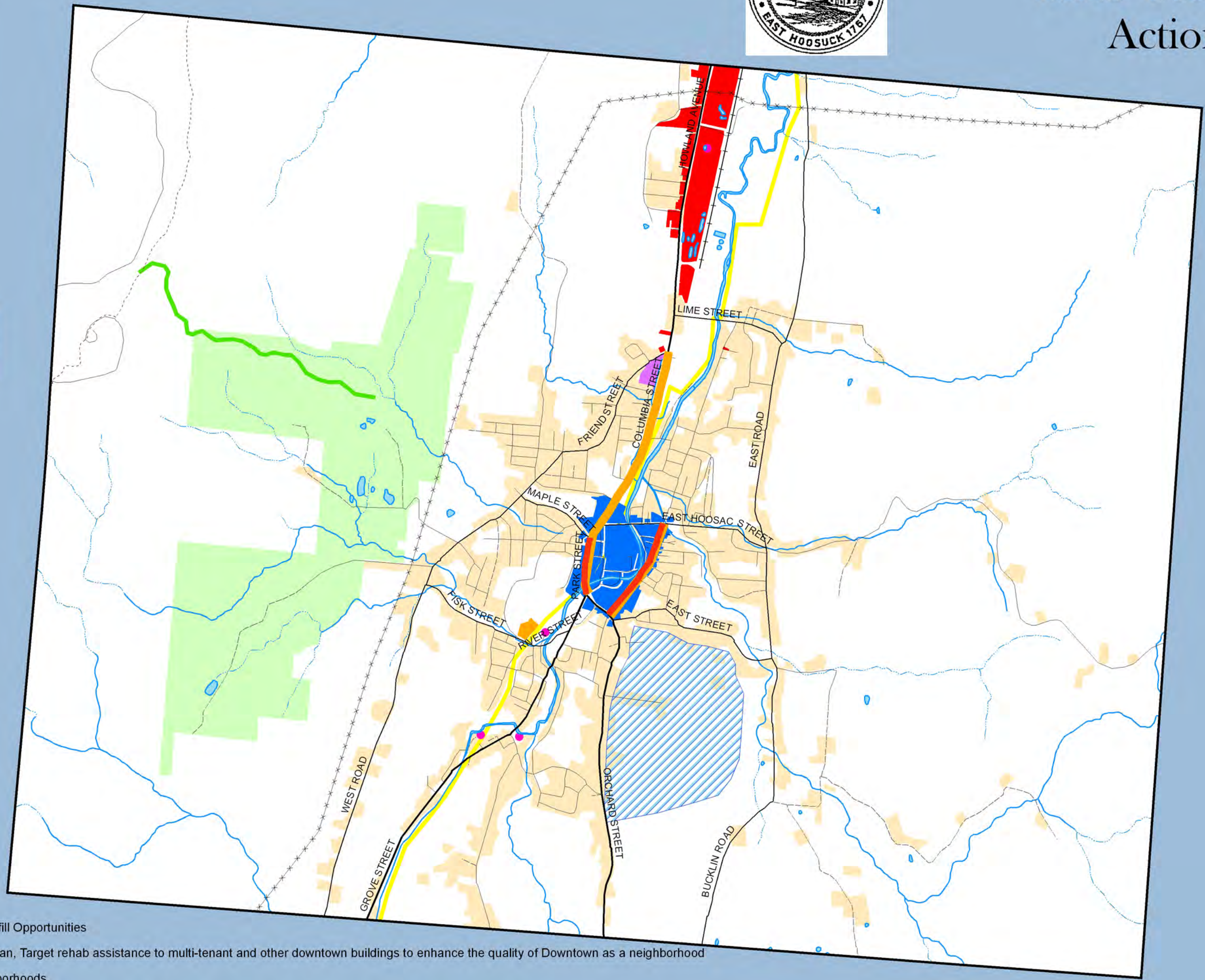
Bureau of Waste Prevention

Major Facilities – facilities that are regulated by the DEP. These are considered to have the greatest environmental significance. Facilities included are:

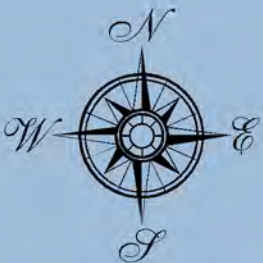
- Large Quantity Generators of Hazardous Waste
- Large Quantity Toxic Users
- Hazardous Waste Recyclers
- Hazardous Waste Treatment, Storage and / or Disposal Facilities
- Facilities with Air Operating Permits
- Facilities with Groundwater Discharge Permits

Town of Adams Massachusetts

Community Development Plan Land Use Suitability Action Map



- Identify Economic Redevelopment / Infill Opportunities
- Implement Downtown Development Plan, Target rehab assistance to multi-tenant and other downtown buildings to enhance the quality of Downtown as a neighborhood
- Preserve and Invest in Existing Neighborhoods
- Evaluate the feasibility of housing reuse in the McDermid Mill, the Old Stone Mill, Curtis Fine Papers, and other underutilized mill buildings
- Target redevelopment of vacant/underutilized upper floors on Park St, Summer St, and Route 8 Corridor to upgrade the quality of the Towns housing stock
- Streetscape and building improvements along Park and Summer Streets; historic resource protection
- Implement Amended Master Plan for Greylock Glen
- ▨ Water Distribution improvements for residential expenaion area within urban service boundary
- Extend Ashuwillticook Trail north to Downtown North Adams
- Renfrew Park Phased Renovation Project and Neighborhood Revililization Catalyst
- Repair Tennis Courts at Russell Field
- Re-establish winter use of the Thunderbolt Trail



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet
Massachusetts State Plane Meters
North American Datum 1983

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This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

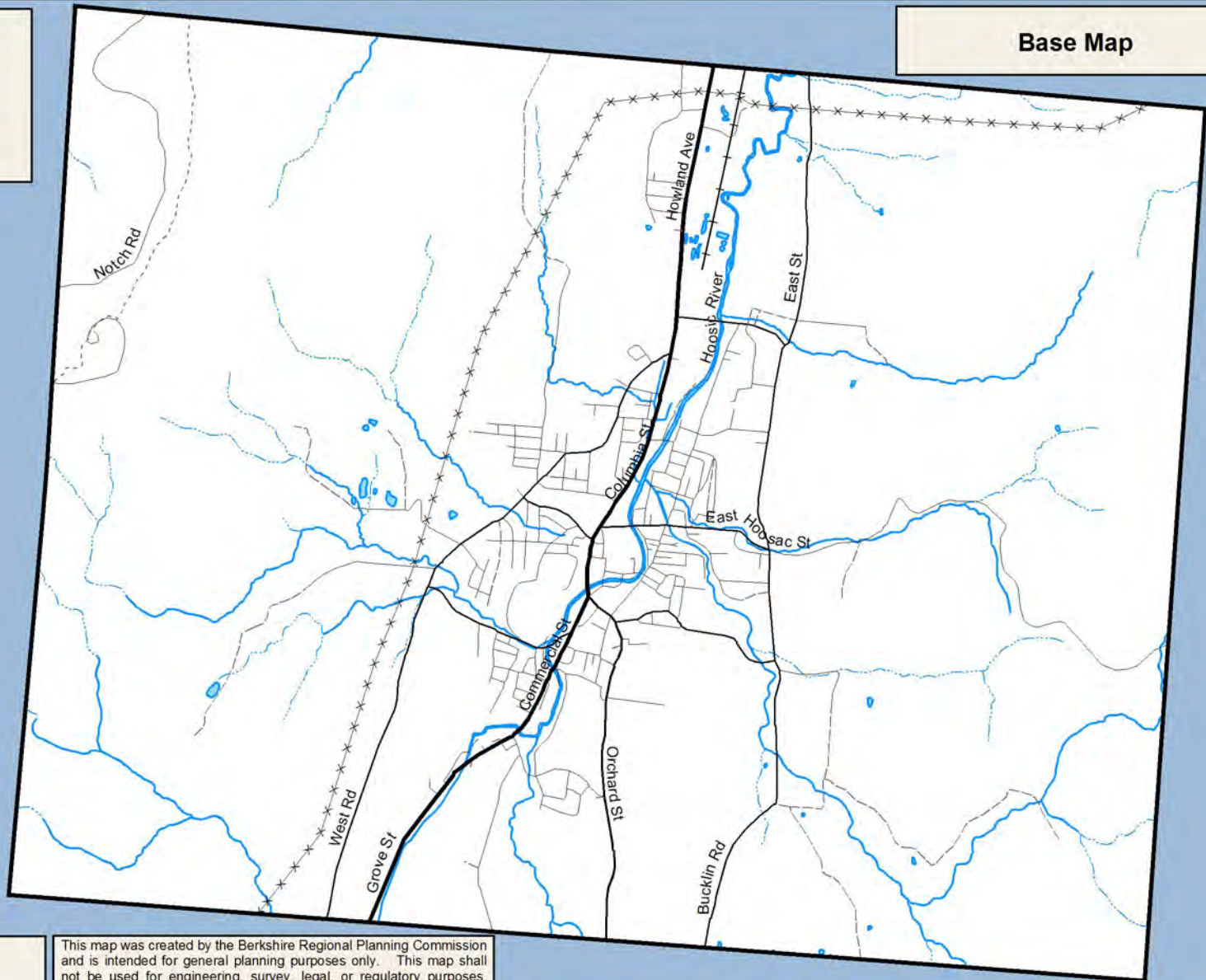
/cdp/adm/projects/actionmap.mxd June 15, 2004

Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

- Lake or Pond
- Stream
- - - Intermittent Stream
- Local Road
- = Major Road
- - - Dirt Road
- - - Trails
- + Railroads
- x Transmission Lines

Base Map

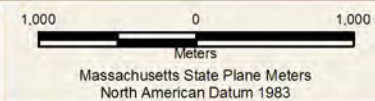


/cdp/adm/projects/basemap.mxd
May 10, 2002



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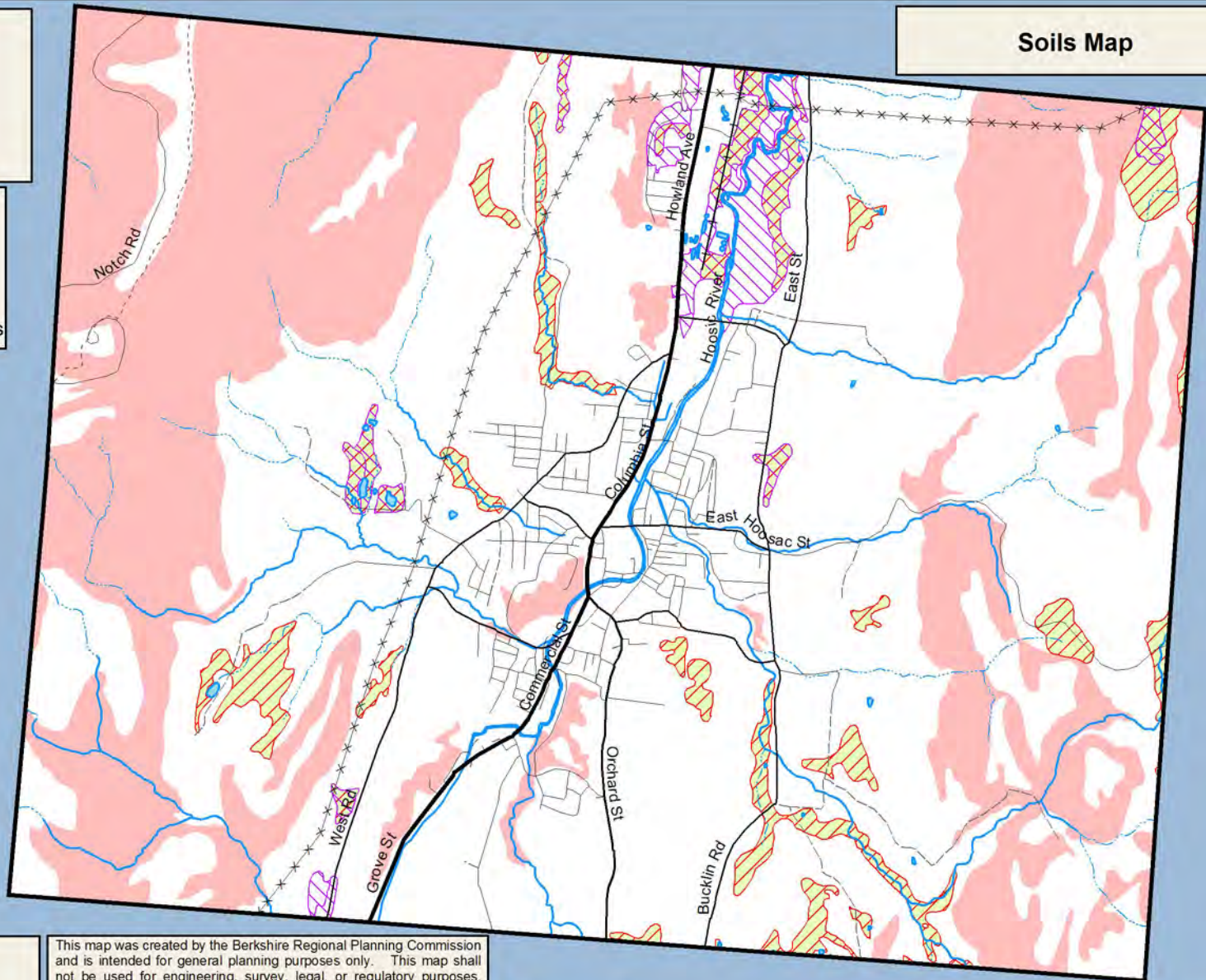
Massachusetts State Plane Meters
North American Datum 1983

Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

-  Highly Erodible Soils
-  Hydric Soils
-  Poorly Drained Soils
-  Excessively Drained Soils

Soils Map

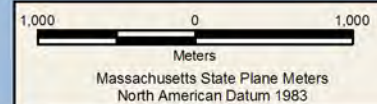


/cdp/adm/projects/soils.mxd
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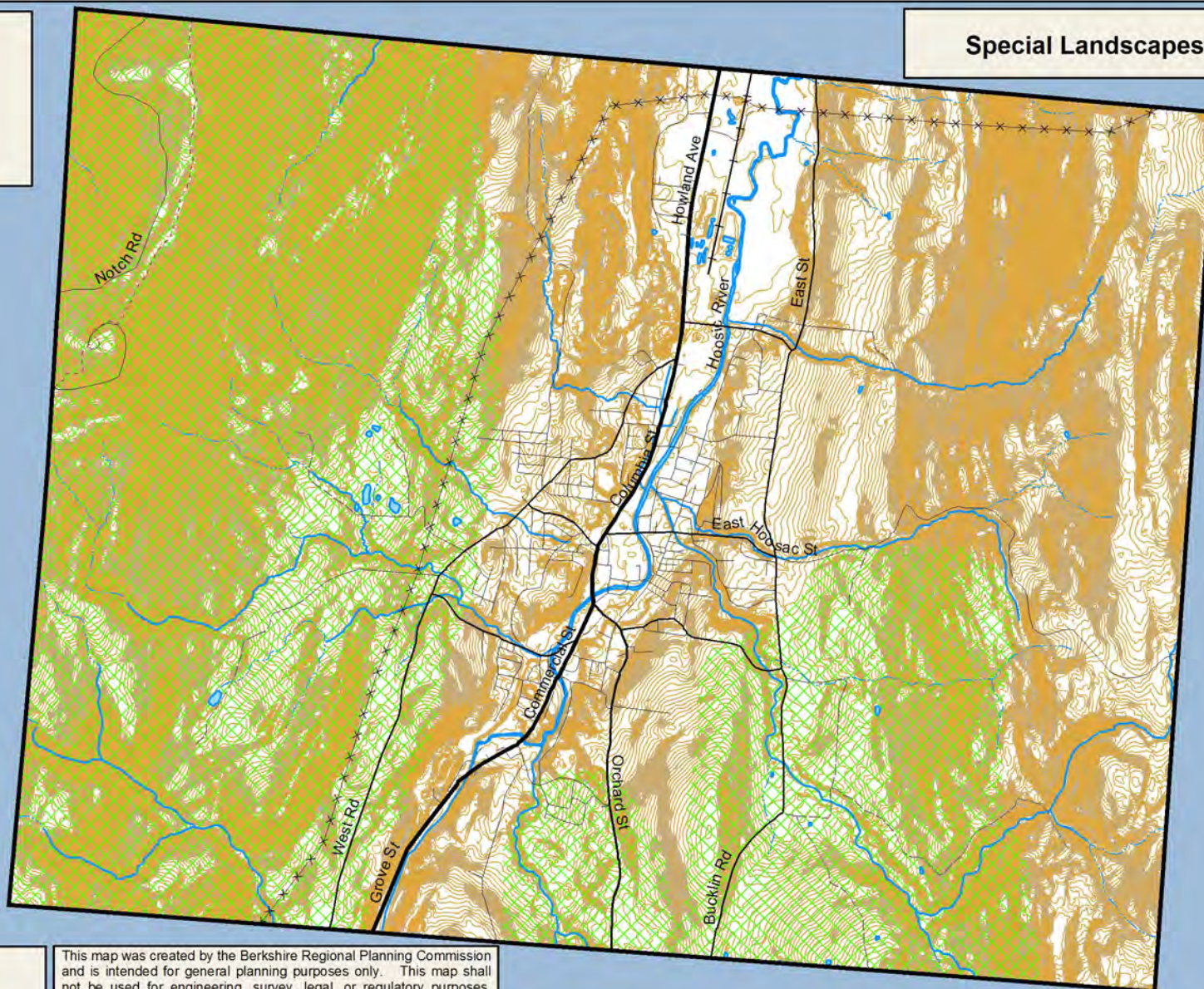


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

- Scenic Landscape
- Contours - 3 m interval
- Slope > 15%

Special Landscapes

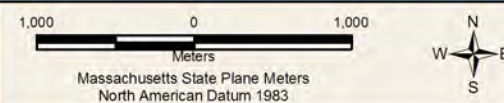


/cdp/adm/projects/speciallandscapes.mxd
May 10, 2002



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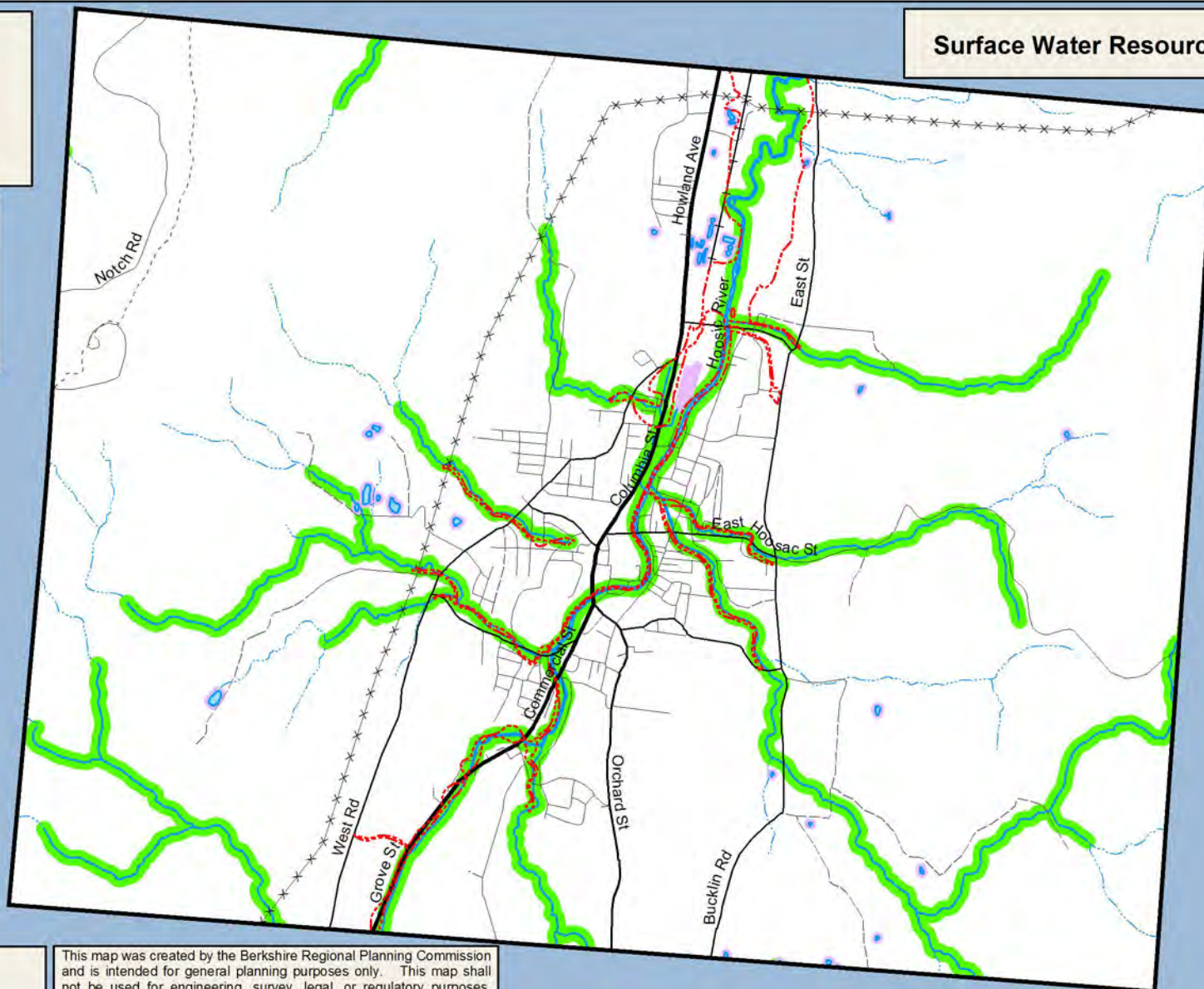


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

-  FEMA 100yr Floodplain
-  Lake / Pond Resource Area - 100ft
-  River Protection Area - 200ft

Surface Water Resources

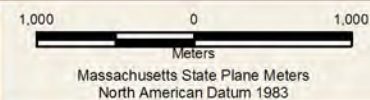


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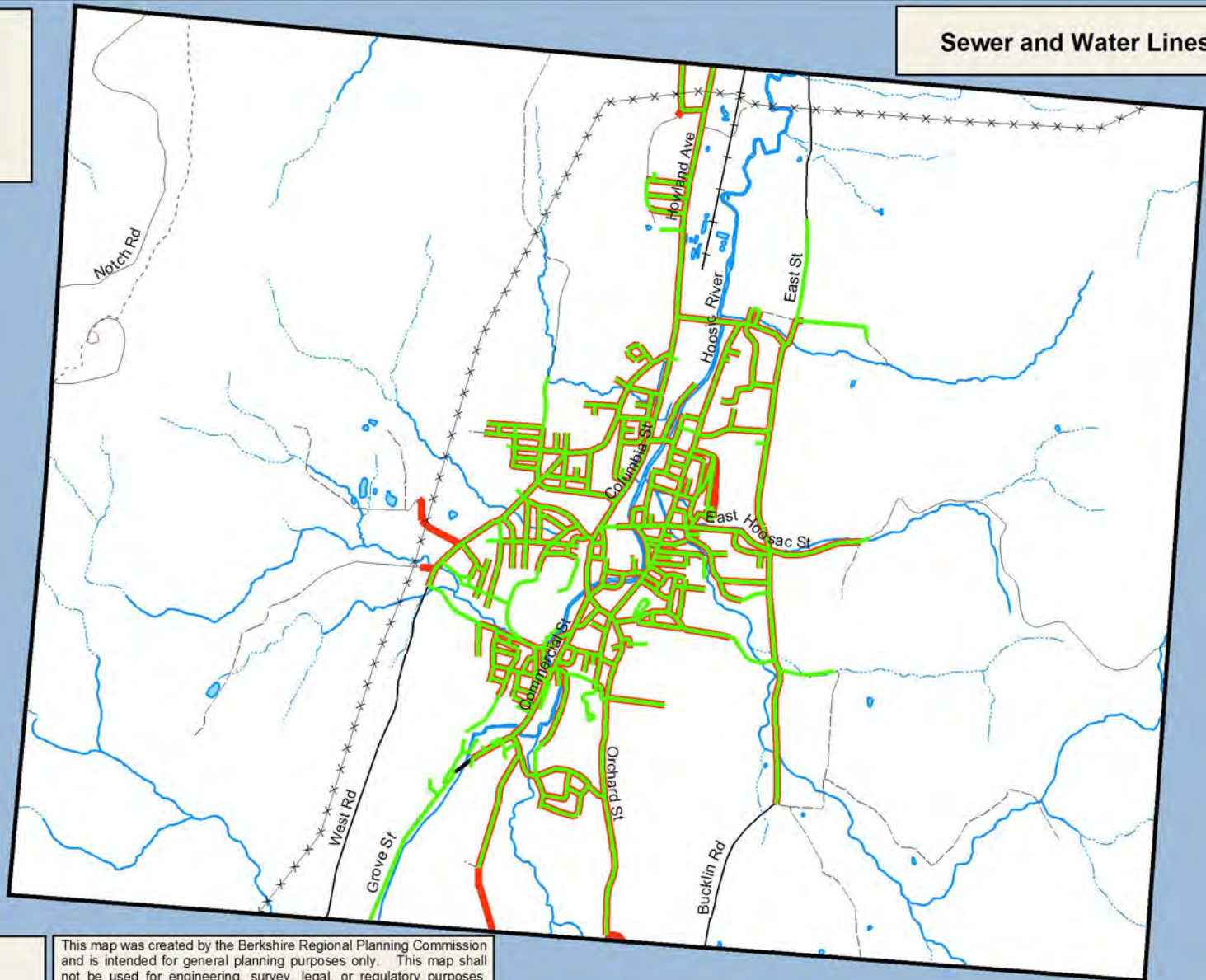


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

 Sewer Line
 Water Line

Sewer and Water Lines

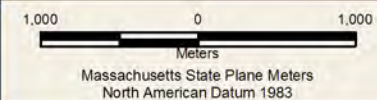


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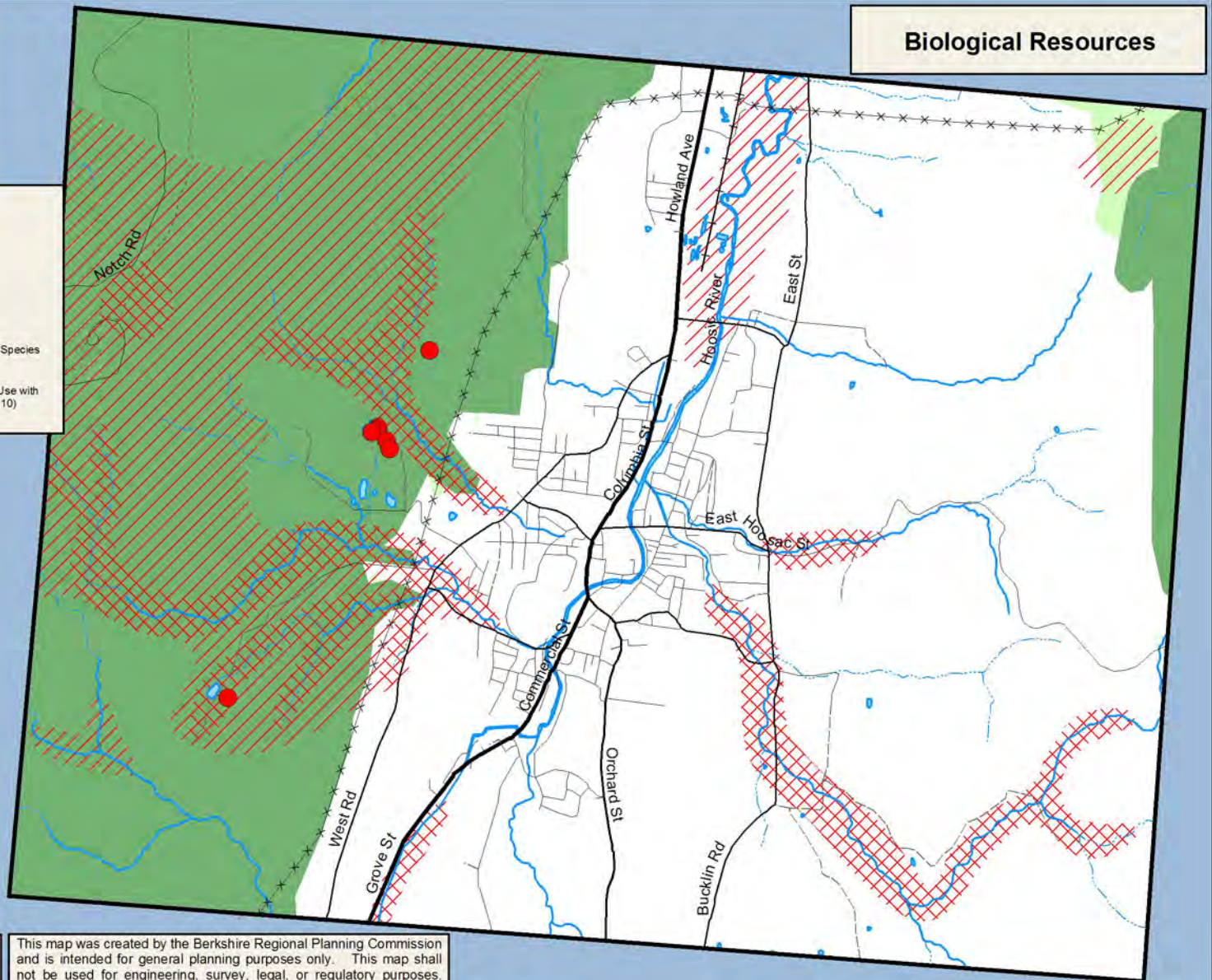


Town of Adams

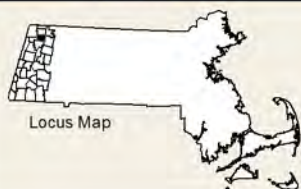
Community Development Plan

Biological Resources

-  NHESP BioMap Core Habitat
-  NHESP BioMap Supporting Natural Landscape
-  NHESP 2003 Massachusetts Certified Vernal Pools
-  NHESP 2003 Priority Habitats for State-Protected Rare Species
-  NHESP 2003 Estimated Habitats for Rare Wildlife: For Use with the MA Wetlands Protection Act Regulations (310 CMR 10)

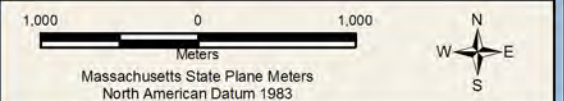


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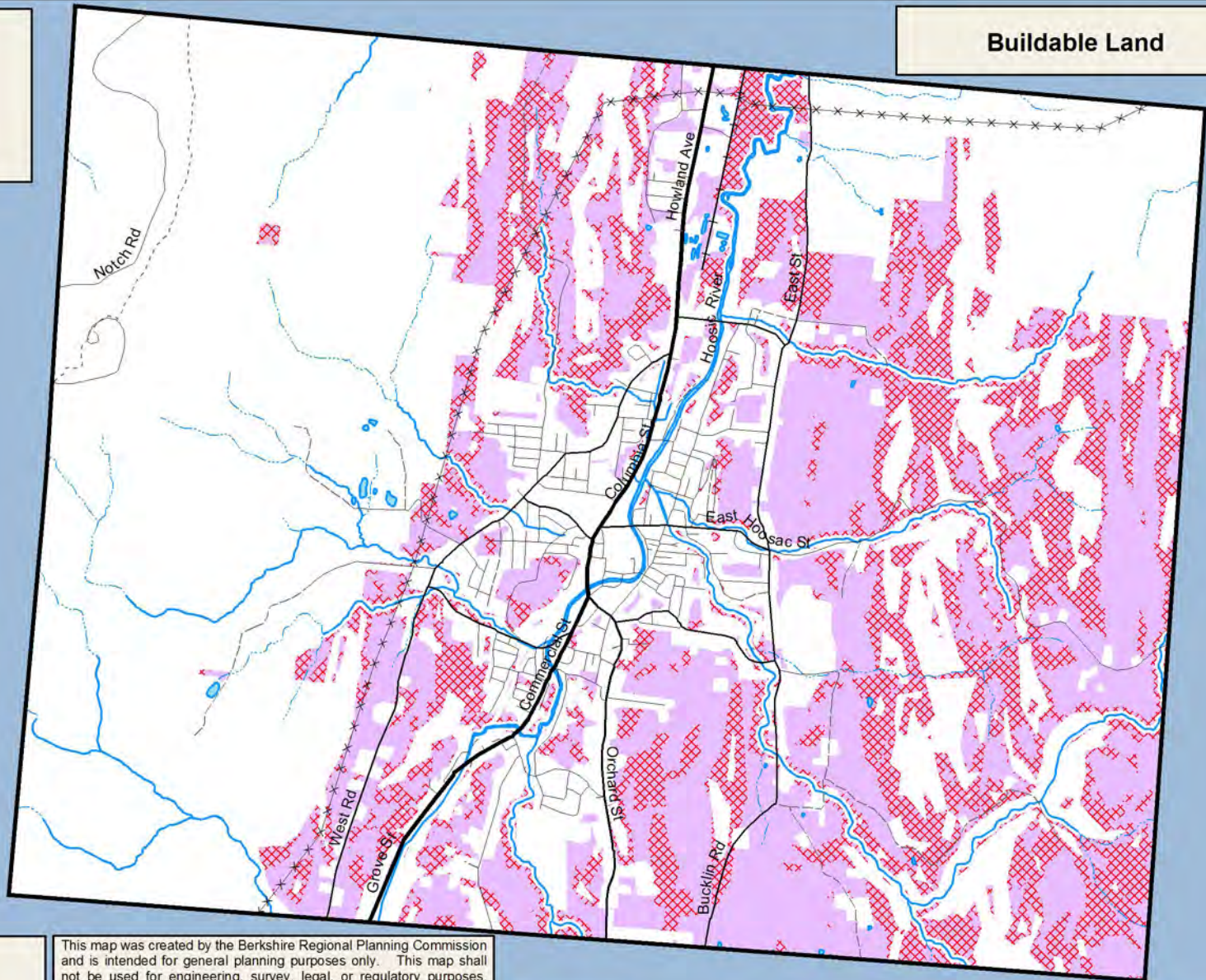


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

-  Partial Constraints
-  Buildable Land

Buildable Land

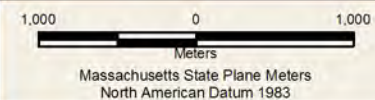


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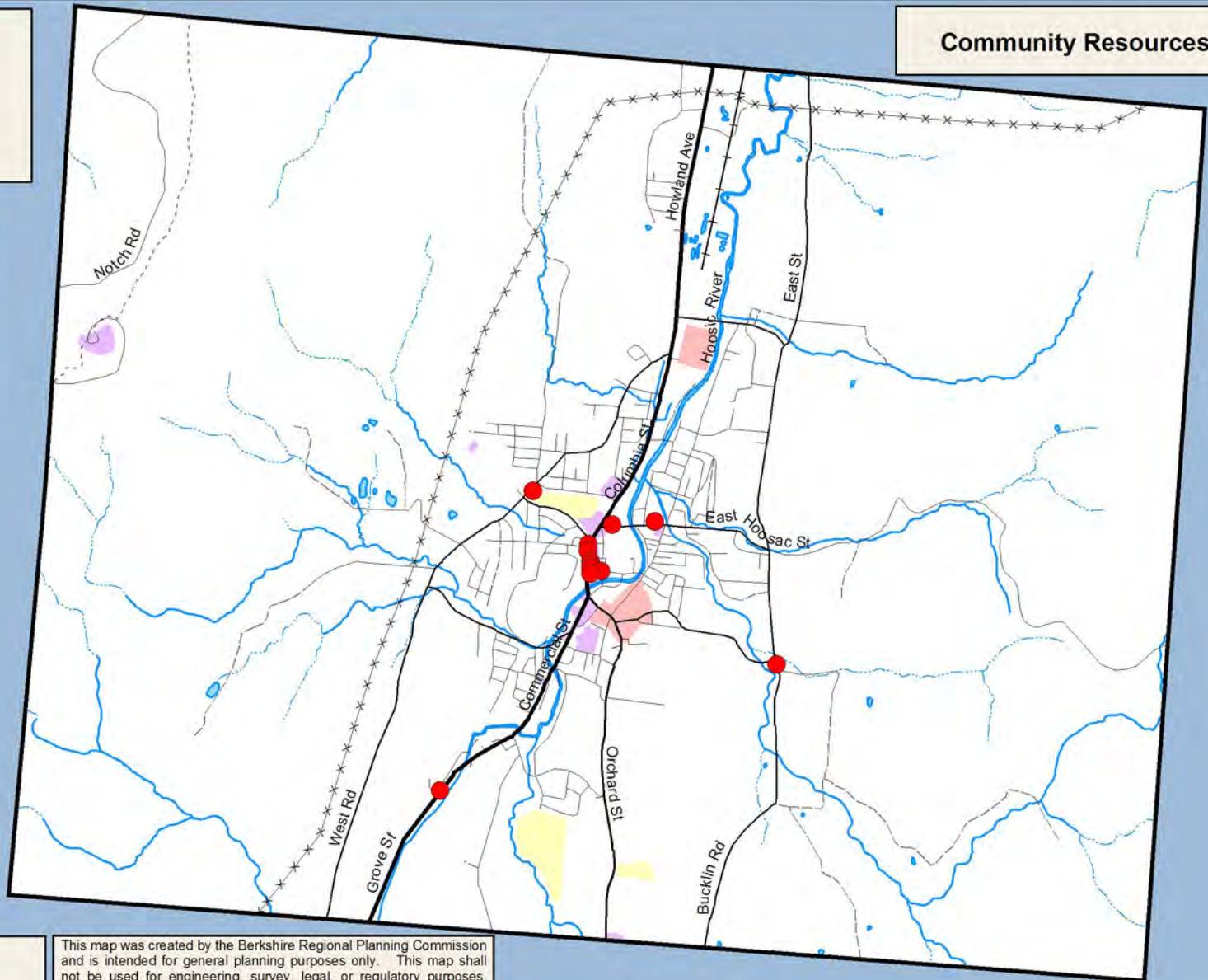


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

- State Registered Historic Point
- State Registered Historic Site
- Public Facilities
- Cemeteries

Community Resources

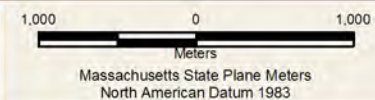


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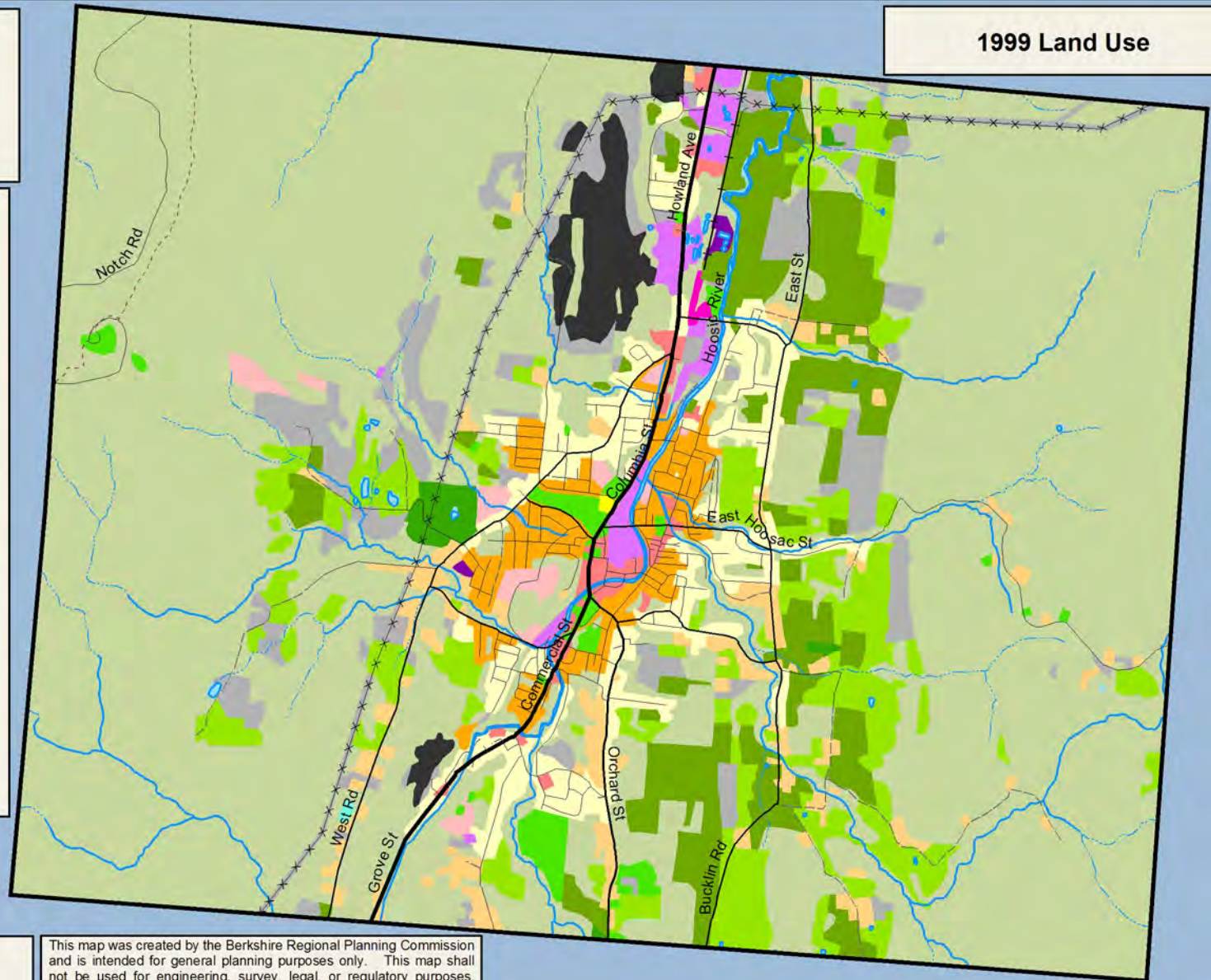


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

1999 Land Use

-  Cropland
-  Pasture
-  Forest
-  Wetland
-  Mining
-  Open Land
-  Participation Recreation
-  Residential - Multi-Family
-  Residential - Smaller than 1/4 acre lots
-  Residential - 1/4 to 1/2 acre lots
-  Residential - Larger than 1/2 acre lots
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Urban Open
-  Transportation
-  Waste Disposal
-  Water
-  Woody Perennial

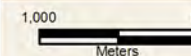


/cdp/adm/projects/currentlanduse.mxd
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Massachusetts State Plane Meters
North American Datum 1983



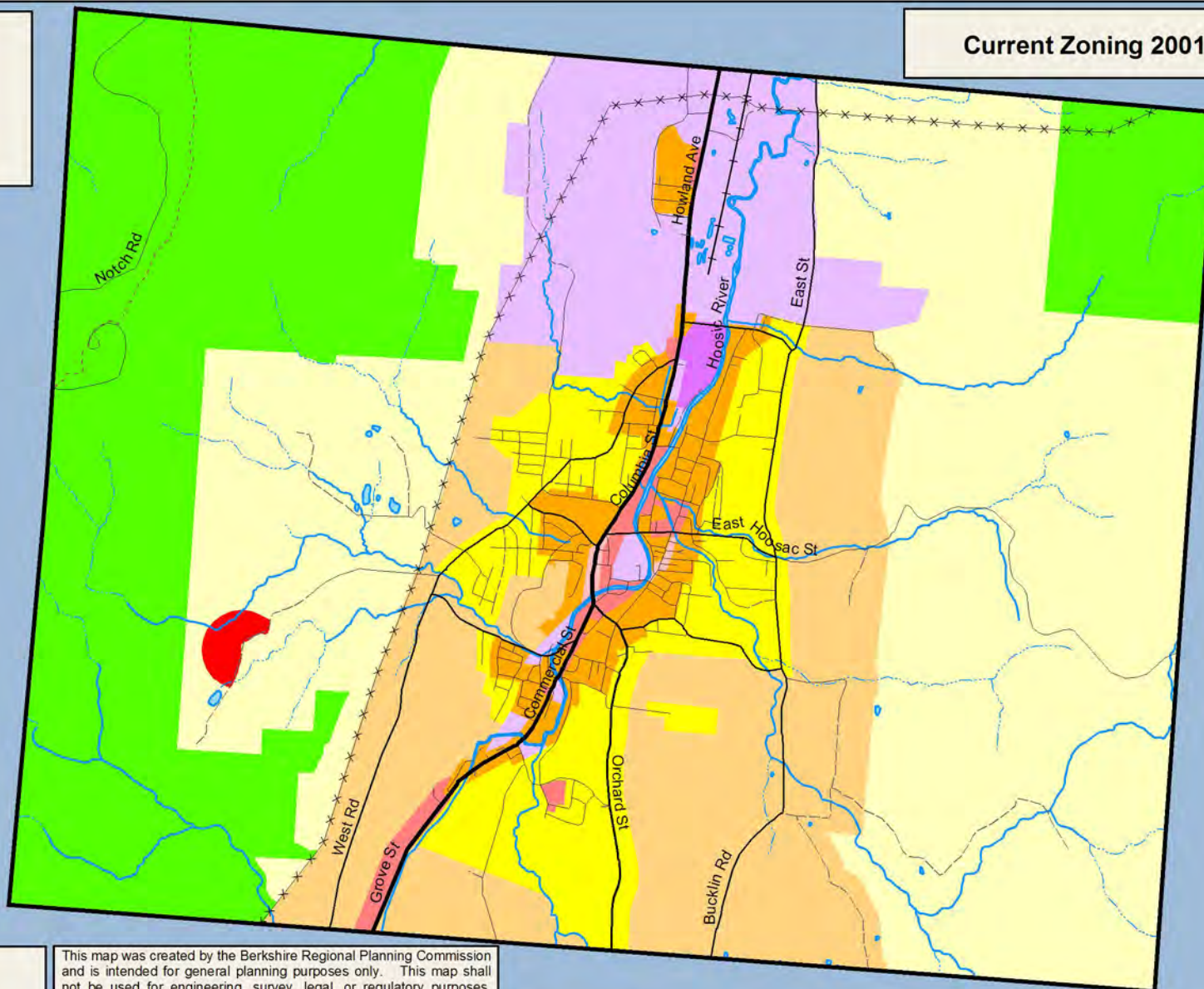
Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

Current Zoning 2001

Zoning

- B1
- B2
- B3
- I
- IP
- OS
- R1
- R2
- R3
- R4

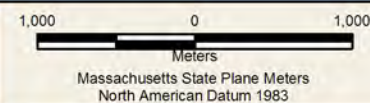


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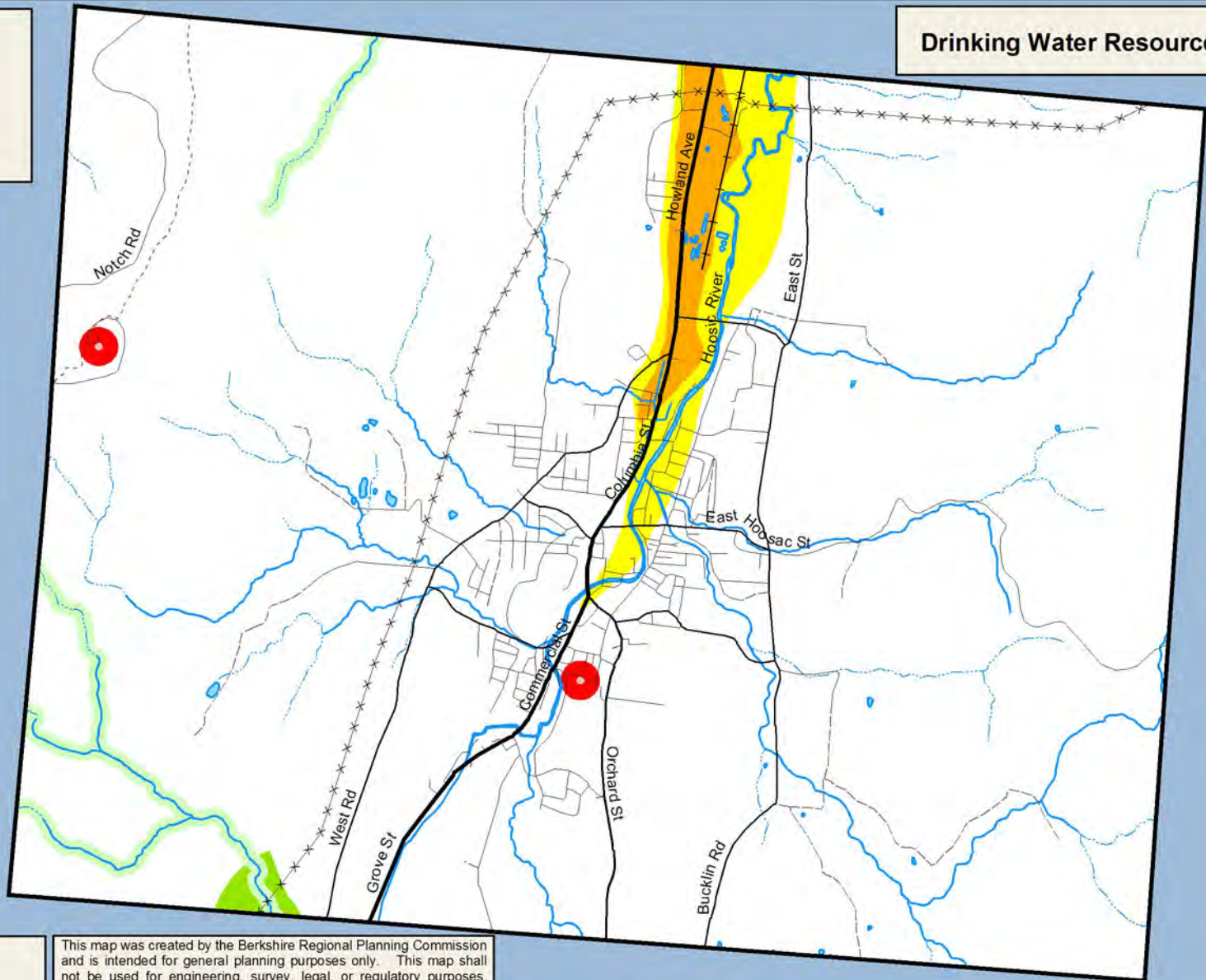


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

-  Surface Water Protection Zone B
-  Surface Water Protection Zone A
-  Public Water Supply Zone 1
-  Interim Wellhead Protection Area
-  High Yield Aquifer
-  Medium Yield Aquifer

Drinking Water Resources

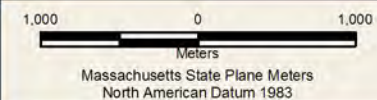


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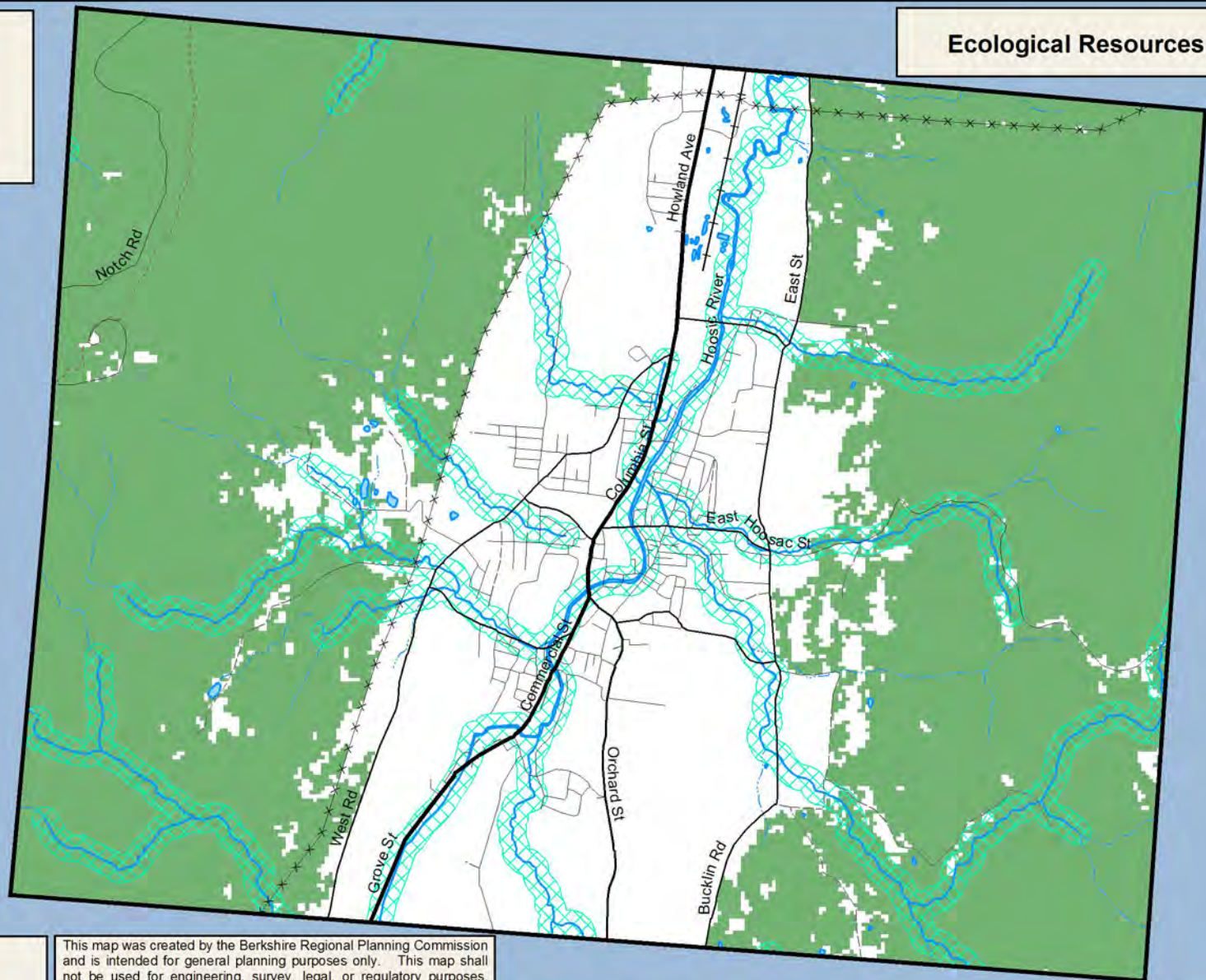


Town of Adams

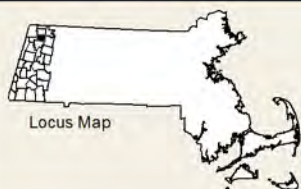
Community Development Plan

- MRIP Contiguous Natural Land
- MRIP Riparian Corridor

Ecological Resources

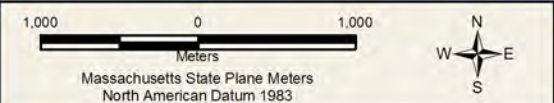


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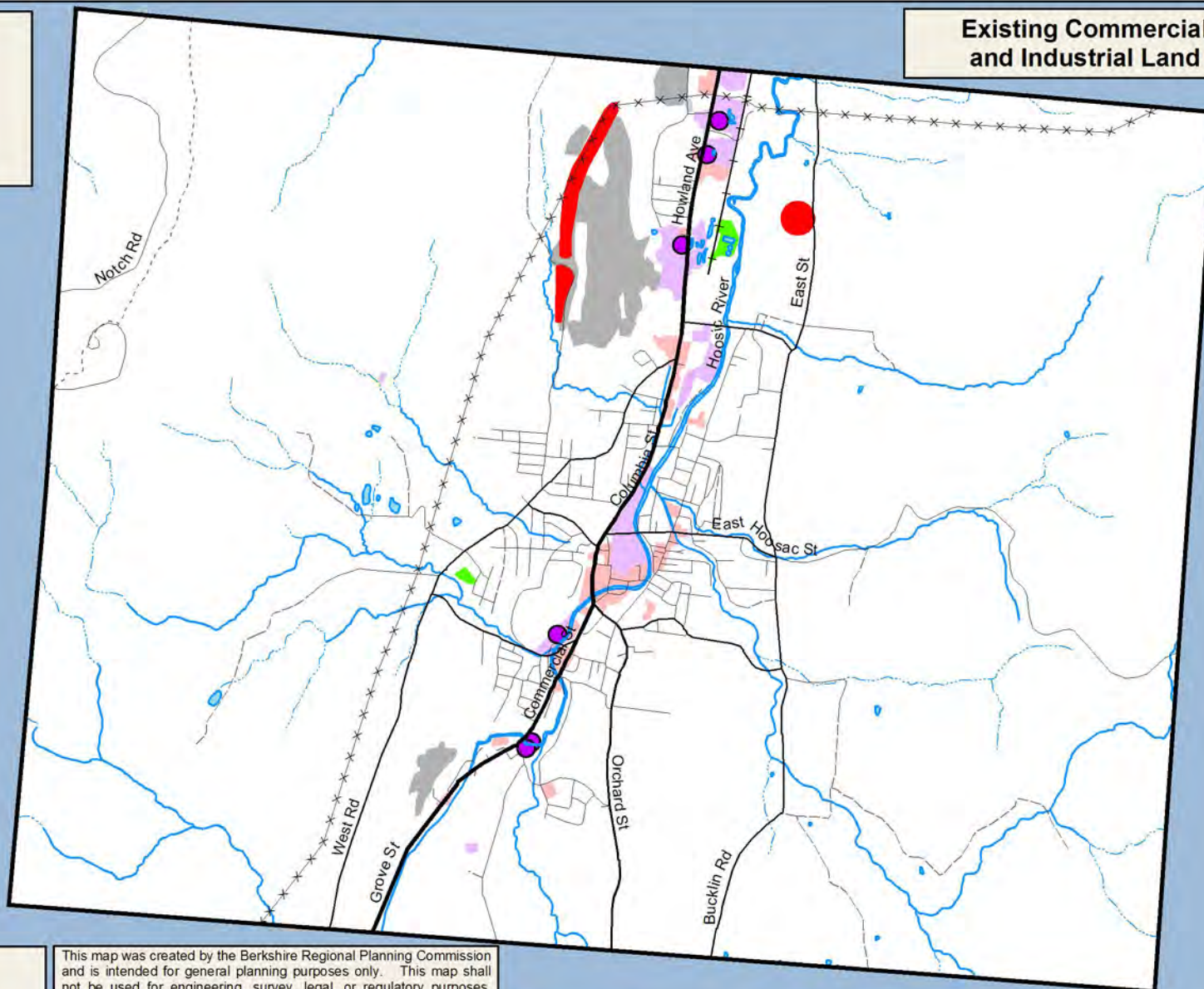


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

-  Mining
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Waste Disposal
-  Solid Waste Facility
-  Permitted Discharges

Existing Commercial and Industrial Land

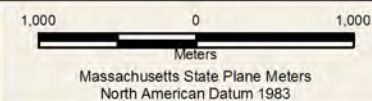


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May 10, 2002



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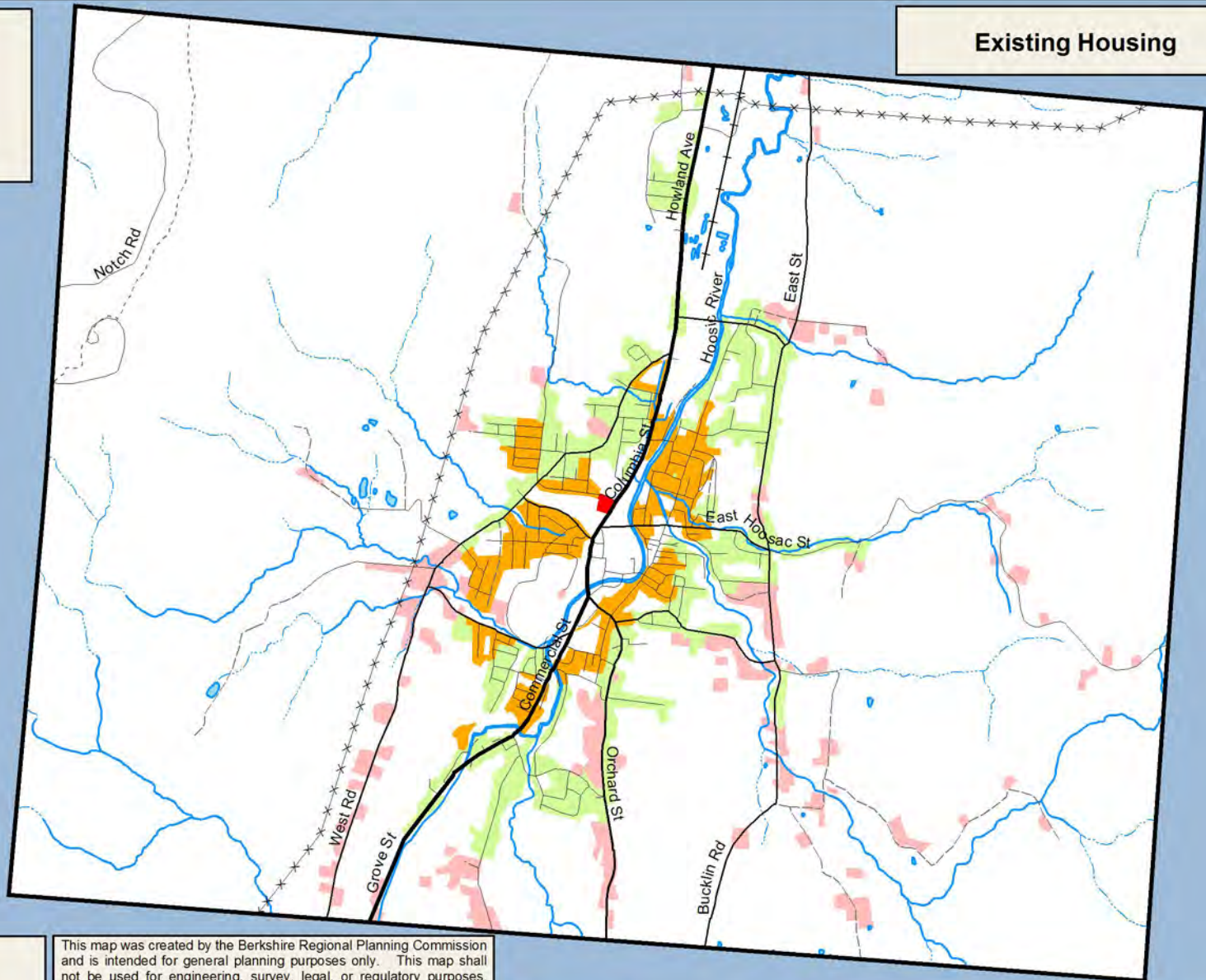
Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

Residential Lot Size

- Multi-Family
- Smaller then 1/4 acre lots
- 1/4 to 1/2 acre lots
- Larger then 1/2 acre lots

Existing Housing

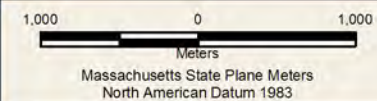


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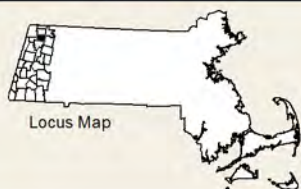


Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

-  Cropland
-  Pasture
-  Forest
-  Wetland
-  Mining
-  Open Land
-  Participation Recreation
-  Residential - Multi-Family
-  Residential - Smaller then 1/4 acre lots
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-  Residential - Larger then 1/2 acre lots
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Urban Open
-  Transportation
-  Waste Disposal
-  Water
-  Woody Perennial

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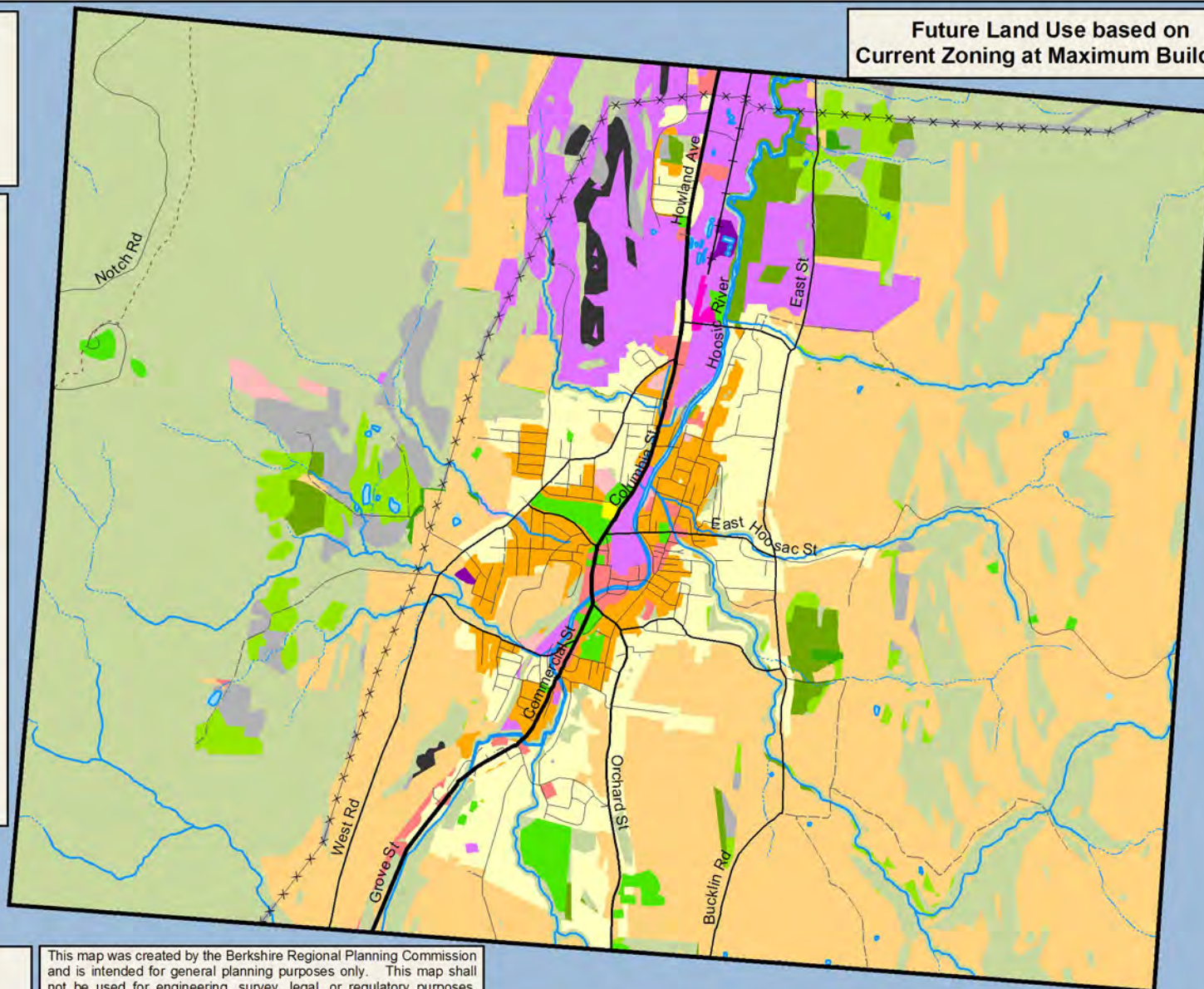


1,000
Meters

Massachusetts State Plane Meters
North American Datum 1983



Future Land Use based on
Current Zoning at Maximum Buildout



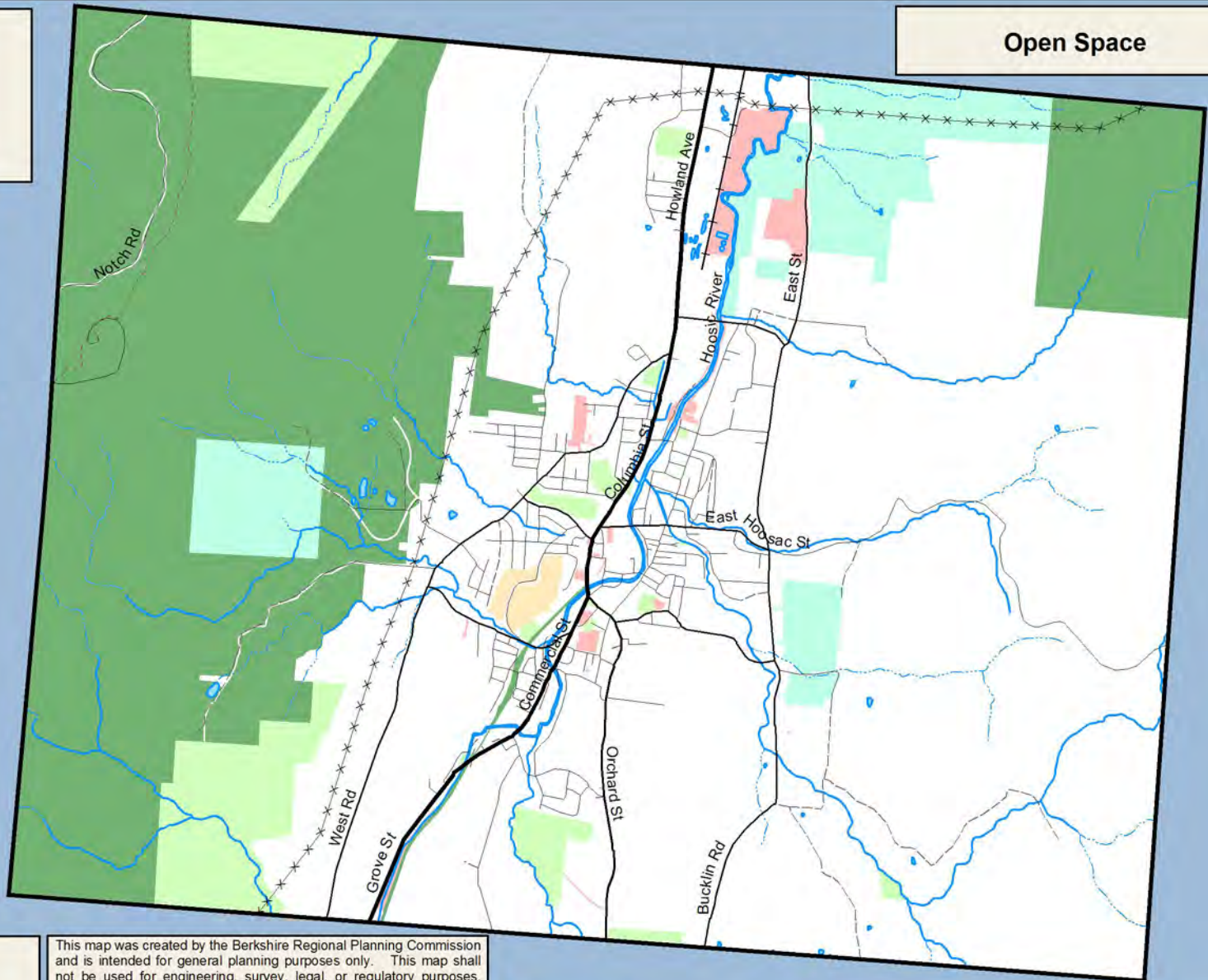
Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

Open Space Status

- State - Protected
- Municipal - Protected
- Municipal - Unprotected
- Private - Protected
- Private - Unprotected

Open Space

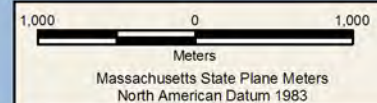


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Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

Rental Unit Density

Less than 1 unit/acre

Between 1 and 10 units/acre

Greater than 10 units/acre

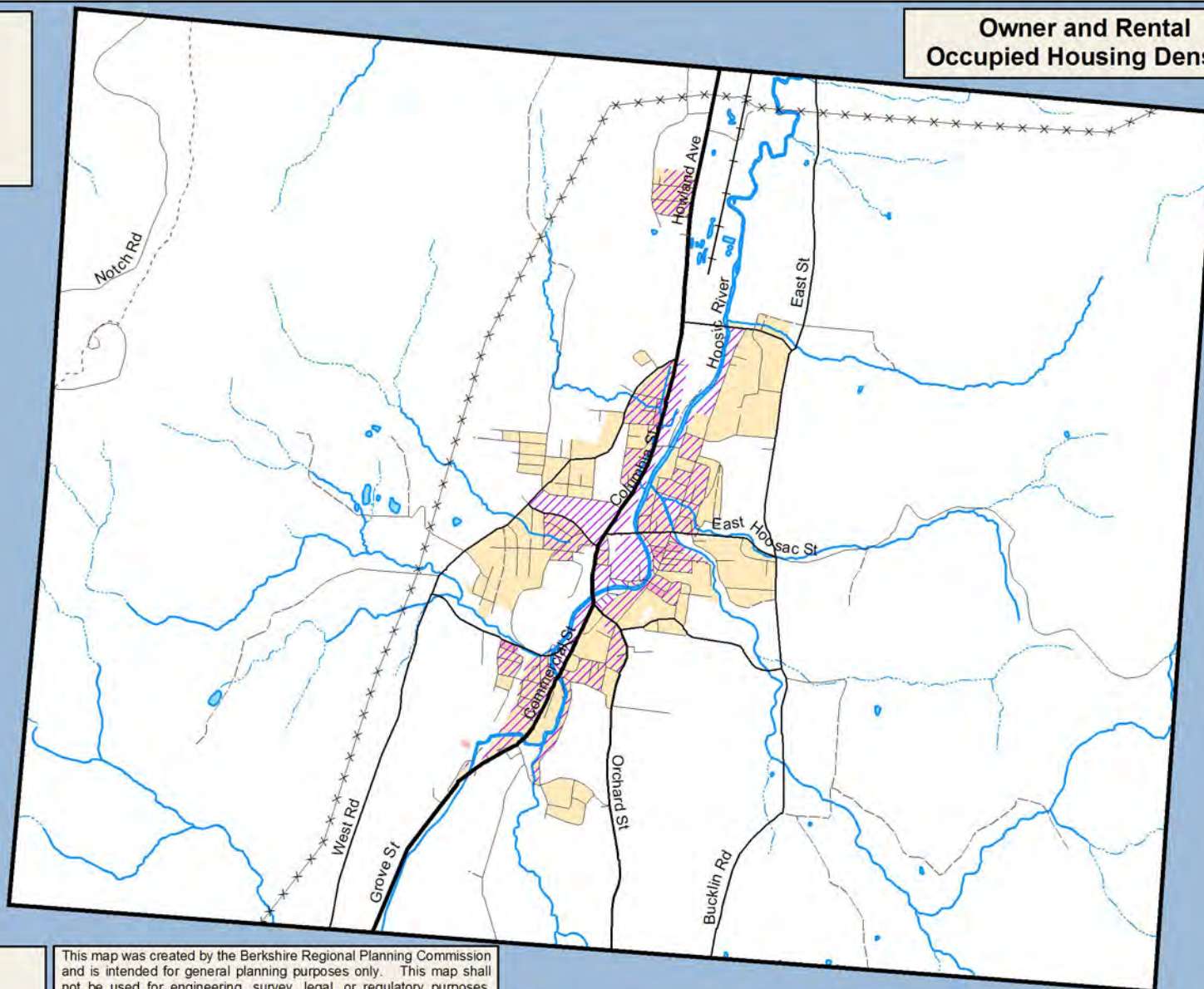
Owner Unit Density

Less than 1 unit/acre

Between 1 and 5 units/acre

Greater than 5 units/acre

Owner and Rental Occupied Housing Density



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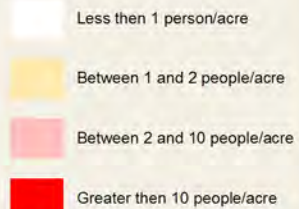
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North American Datum 1983



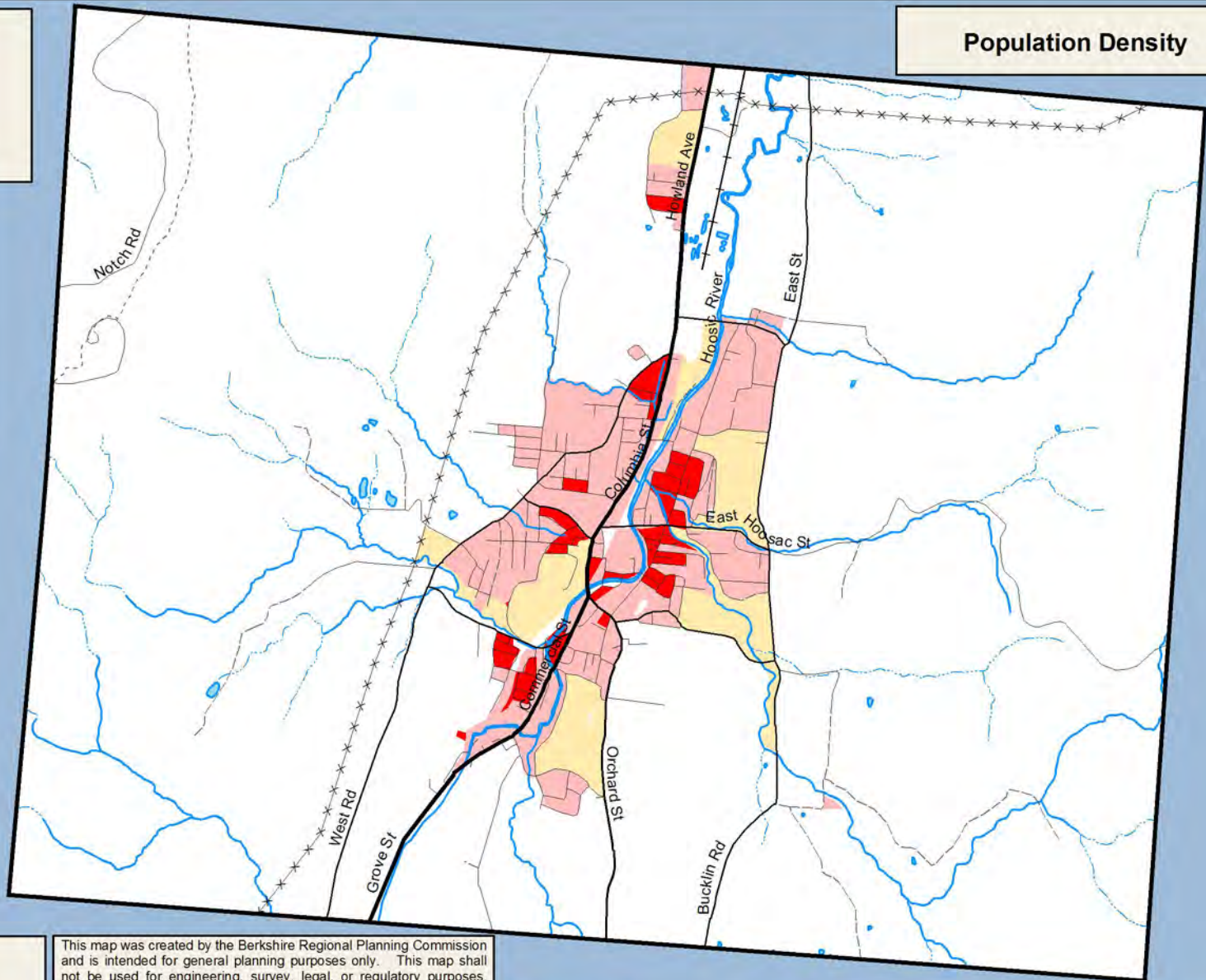
Town of Adams

Community Development Plan

Population Density



Population Density

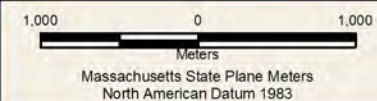


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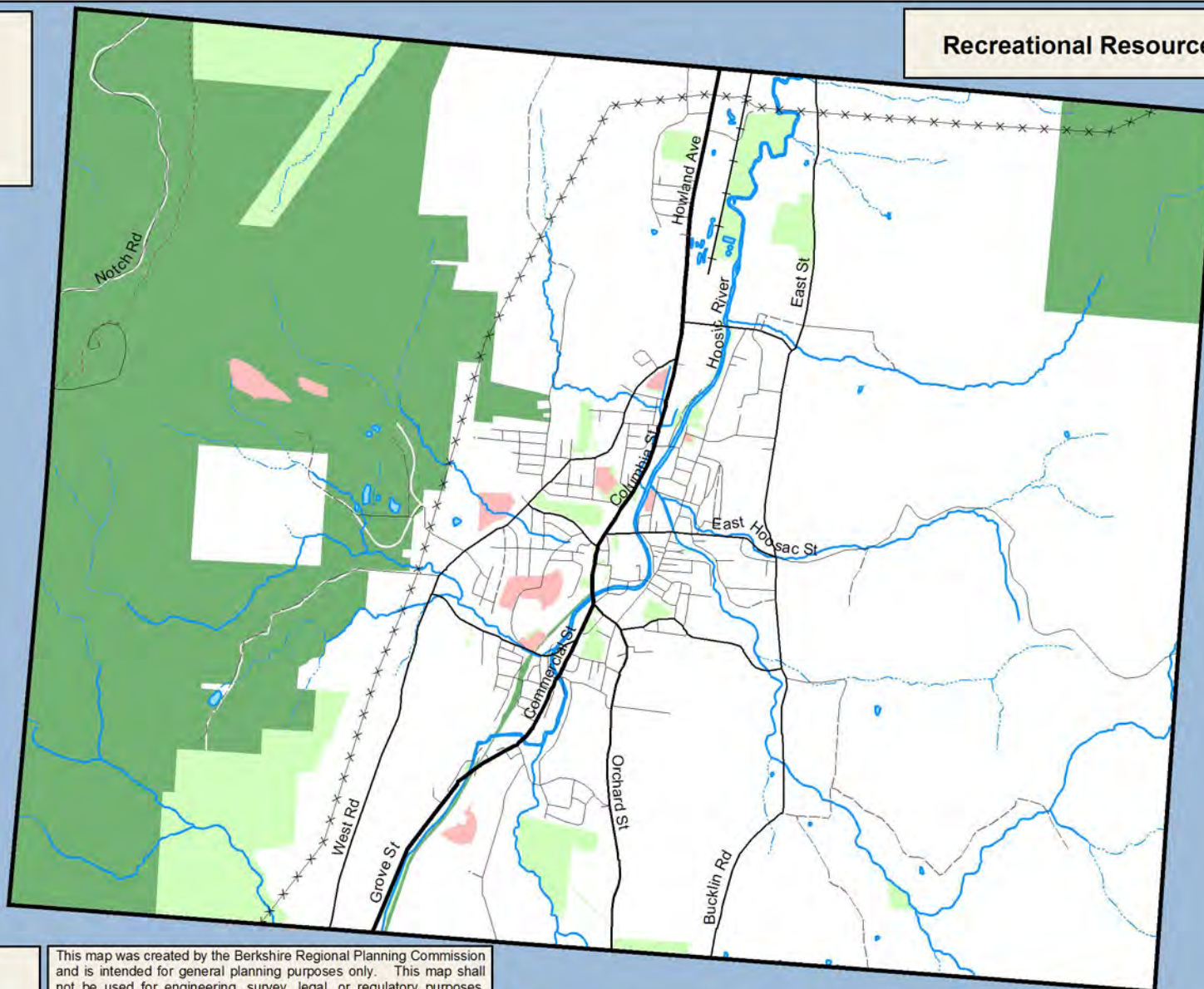


Town of Adams

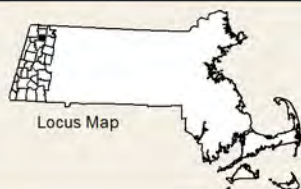
Community Development Plan

- Participation Recreation Land
- Publicly Accessible Open Space**
 - State
 - Municipal

Recreational Resources

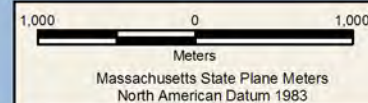


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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



Appendix



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN TOWN OF ADAMS



Appendix - A.1



I. INTRODUCTION

This section examines the socio-economic trends in Adams and in the surrounding area of Berkshire County, which affect housing supply and demand.

II. Housing Profile - Supply

A. Current Housing Stock Statistics

Current Housing Stock

Source: *Town Assessor Data, as of 2/2003*

Table H-1: Current Housing Stock:	Parcel	Units
Single Family Homes	2,071	2,071
Condominiums	4	4
Two Family Homes	407	814
Three or More Family Homes	195	1,401
Mobile Home units	58	58
Other Units	0	0
Total Housing Stock:	2,735	4,348

Housing Tenure

Table H-2: Census Data: Housing Tenure in 2000 vs.1990					
Housing Occupancy	Number in 2000	% of total, 2000	Number in 1990	% of Total, 1990	% Change 1990-2000
Seasonal	10	.2%	18	.4%	-45%
Owner-Occupied	2,414	55.3%	2,446	56.2%	-1.3%
Rental	1,578	36.2%	1,635	37.5%	-3.5%
Vacant Units	360	8.3%	257	5.9%	+40.1%
% Year round	1.5%		1.7%		-11.8%
Homeowner Units Vacant					
% Year Rental Units	9.4%		7.3%		+28.8%
Vacant					
Total Housing Stock:	4,362		4,356		+1.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Housing units in Adams are most commonly Single Family Homes, but the percentage of single family units (47%) is below that of Berkshire County (62%). Although the number of 2 family housing constitutes 9% of the homes in Adams, there is a significant decrease in housing of 3 families (2%) and 4 or more families (2.5%).

Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory

Three hundred forty one (341) or 7.8% of the 4,362 year-round Housing Units listed by DHCD are considered Chapter 40B Units.¹ The Adams Housing Authority maintains 64 units characterized as low to moderate income located on Columbia Street. "Chapter 40B Units" are units considered affordable by low- and moderate-income households with long-term restrictions that ensure that it will continue to be affordable. Chapter 40B authorizes a housing agency or developer to obtain a single comprehensive permit for

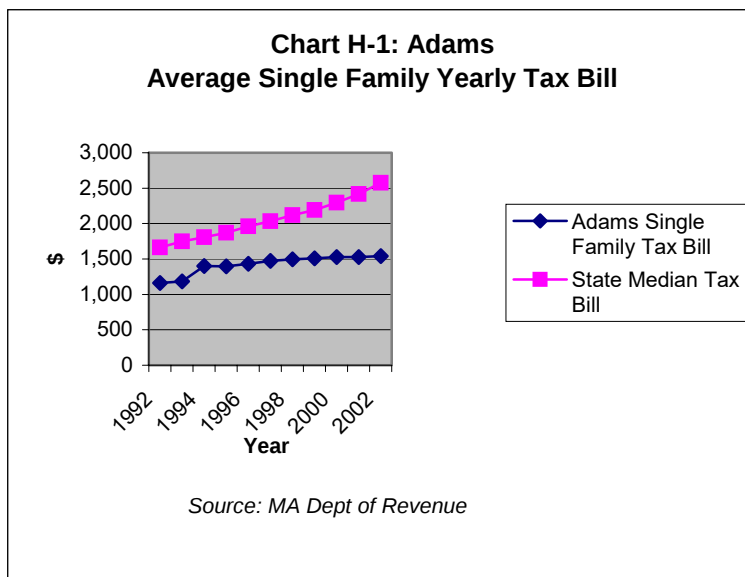
¹ Massachusetts DHCD Inventory of CH40B Subsidized Housing Inventory through October 1, 2001, revised as of April 24, 2002

the construction of subsidized low- or moderate-income housing. If a community in which less than 10% of its total year-round housing stock is subsidized low- or moderate-income housing, denies a comprehensive permit, or imposes conditions that make the project un-economic, the developer may appeal to the state Housing Appeals Committee for review of the local action.

Property Values

- 2,032 taxable single-family parcels in town in 2002
- Average assessed value of homes is \$87,192
- \$17.65 tax rate for all residential property Adams in 2002
- Compared to average rate of \$12.67 for Berkshire County Towns.
- The average single-family tax bill in 2002 was \$1,357.00
- Lower than state median of \$2,583.00, ranking Adams 316 out of 334 Massachusetts towns reporting tax rates.

Chart H-1: Single Family Tax Bill Local Vs. State



Assessed Value vs. Market Value

Table H-3: Annual Single Family Home Statistics

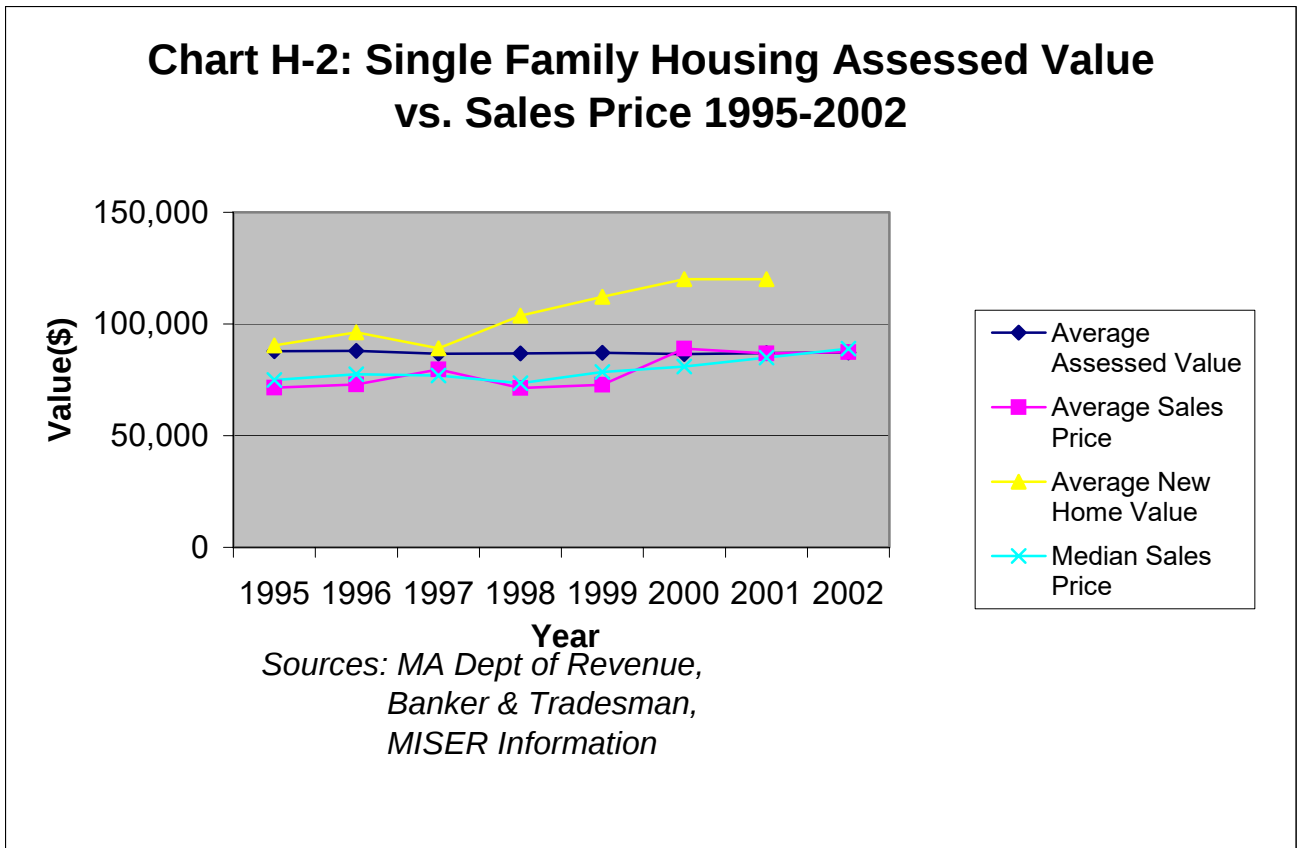
Year	Average Assessed Value	Average Sales Price	Median Sales Price	Total Number of Sales
1995	87,844	71,669	75,000	57
1996	87,964	72,975	77,500	48
1997	86,730	79,695	77,000	65
1998	86,760	71,359	73,478	64
1999	87,122	72,735	78,489	59
2000	86,508	88,985	81,000	75
2001	86,949	86,861	85,000	71
2002	87,192	87,449	89,000	64

Sources:

Assessed Property Values Data: Massachusetts Department of Revenue

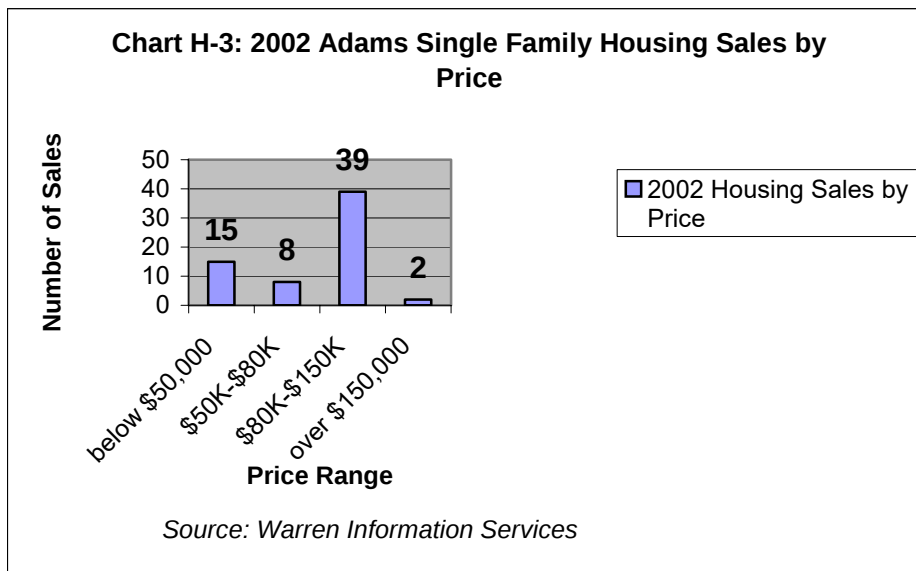
Sales Data: Warren Information Services

Chart H-2: Single Family Home Statistics 1994-2002



2002 Housing Sales by Price

Chart H-3: Single Family Home Sales By Price



Local Educational Expenditures

Each year, the Department of Education reports community educational expenditures. The Net Average Membership Pupils is the number of students residing in Town, averaged over the entire year. The number includes pupils from the Town enrolled in local and regional schools, and those being tuitioned to out-of-town schools. The number does not include non-residents. Cost per pupil is based on the DOE integrated operating costs. The DOE integrated operating cost is one of the most widely accepted measures for comparing educational spending among communities. It reflects the community's share of regional school spending as well as that of its own local schools. The figure does not include capital outlay and construction costs. The following chart shows the total number of membership pupils, and calculated operational costs per pupil for the Town from 1995-2000. It also includes school expenditures as a percentage of all town expenditures from the general fund on government operational costs excluding capital outlay and construction costs.

Table H-4: Educational Expenditures 1995-2000				
Year	Net Avg. Membership Pupils	Education spending as % of all Town expenditures	Cost Per Pupil	School Cost Per Capita (Resident)
1995	1394	30.61	5,273	234
1996	1385	28.90	5,667	233
1997	1432	29.14	5,656	246
1998	1352	31.13	6,228	273
1999	1407	29.58	6,745	280
2000	1451	34.45	7,235	362
Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue				

In 2000, the cost per pupil was \$7,235, which was lower than the Berkshire County average of \$7,831. In 2000, 34.45% of town expenditures were for educational purposes, which was almost 20% lower in relation to the countywide average of 54% educational spending. The DOR lists the Town's 2000 per-capita spending on education to be \$362.43.

Source: Massachusetts Dept of Revenue

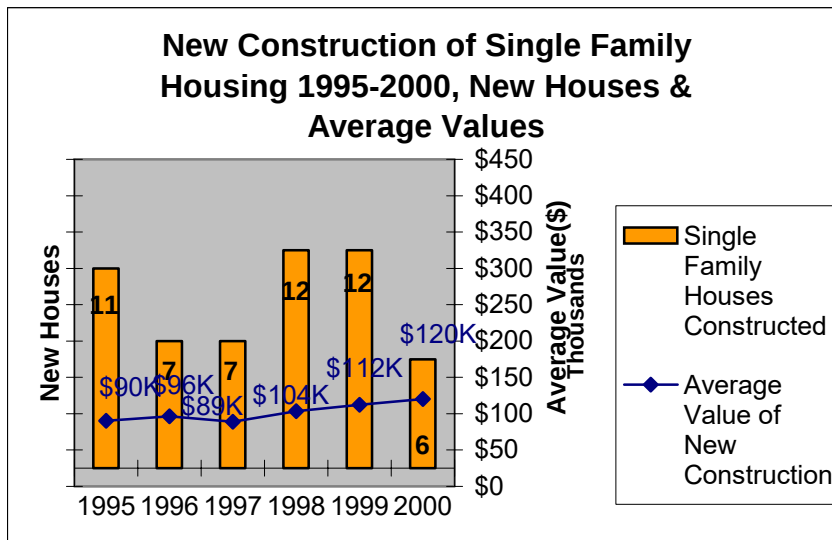
B. Current Development Practices and Available Land

Construction Trends & New Construction 1995-2001

The Department of Housing and Community Development lists the affordable purchase price for households making up to 150% of the median income to be \$240,260 for purposes of EO418 Certification. In 2001,

Table H-5: New Construction Values '95-'01			
Year	Total Single-Family Units Built	Avg New Home Value of Existing Homes	Avg Assessed Value
1995	11	90,349	87,844
1996	7	96,330	87,964
1997	7	89,045	86,730
1998	12	103,685	86,760
1999	12	112,236	87,122
2000	6	120,083	86,508
2001*	6	-	86,949

Source: Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) State Data Center



Sources: MA MISER Data Center Annual New Construction Reports

Renovations

Source: *Town Building Inspector List of Permits for 2000*
(to be included in appendix)

Development Patterns and Constraints

Much of Adams is rural residential. The town has a central downtown center that consists of a cluster of large industrial complexes, modest residential housing, churches, and small retail shops. Housing is dense around the town center, but the majority of development in town is single-family housing along existing roadways on lots larger than the minimum required lot size. Because Adams has experienced a long history of population decline and a very moderate rate of residential development, subdivisions requiring approval under the Subdivision Control Law have not been a significant factor in town. However, as the buildable frontage in the town is developed, land will need to be subdivided and new roads will have to be built to accommodate future residential growth.

The town has 5,800 acres (40%) of permanently protected open space. According to the 2000 Buildout analysis conducted by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, approximately 2,913 acres, 20% of the town, is potentially developable land that is currently undeveloped. The 2000 BRPC Buildout Analysis lists physical factors limiting future development in town such as the steep slopes of the terrain on the east and west sides of town and the large amount of permanently protected land.

The promotion of Adams as a tourist destination has the potential to stimulate growth. As housing becomes increasingly more expensive in south Berkshire County, Adams could very well see an increase in the number of second home owners and year round residents coming to the area over time.

Source: BRPC 2000 Buildout Analysis

Local Zoning Provisions

Adams is divided into nine primary zoning districts. There are four residential zones, R-1, R-2, R3, and R-4, which comprise a majority of the town. The Town also has Wetlands and Flood Plain overlay districts that further regulate development in the primary districts. The following table summarizes the zones and their provisions:

Density Regulations				
District	Minimum Lot Size (sq. Ft)	Minimum Frontage	Maximum Lot Coverage	Maximum Building Height (Ft)
Residence R-1	43,560	150'	25%	30
Residence R-2	21,780	100'	25%	30
Residence R-3	12,000	90'	30%	30
Residence R-4	10,000	75'	35%	30
Business B-1	0	0'	100%	40
Business B-2	10,000	65'	50%	30
Business B-3	10,000	65'	50%	30
I Industrial	20,000	85'	60%	40
IP Industrial Park	43,560	150'	50%	40

Allowed Residential Uses		
District	Allowed Uses by Right	Allowed Uses by Permit
Residence R-1	- One Family Detached Dwelling - Conversion of One Family to Two Family Dwelling	- Two Family Dwelling - Conversion of One Family to more than Two Family Dwelling
Residence R-2	- One Family Detached Dwelling - Conversion of One Family to Two Family Dwelling	- Two Family Dwelling - Conversion of One Family to more than Two Family Dwelling - Apartments/Multi-Family Dwelling
Residence R-3	- One Family Detached Dwelling - Conversion of One Family to Two Family Dwelling	- Two Family Dwelling - Conversion of One Family to more than Two Family Dwelling - Apartments/Multi-Family Dwelling
Residence R-4	- One Family Detached Dwelling - Conversion of One Family to Two Family Dwelling - New Two Family Dwelling	- Conversion of One Family to more than Two Family Dwelling - Apartments/Multi-Family Dwelling
Business B-1, B-2		- Conversion of One Family to Two or more Family Dwelling - Apartments/Multi-Family Dwelling

Source: Town of Adams Zoning By-Law 5/2002

Utilities

Source: BRPC Data Book 2001

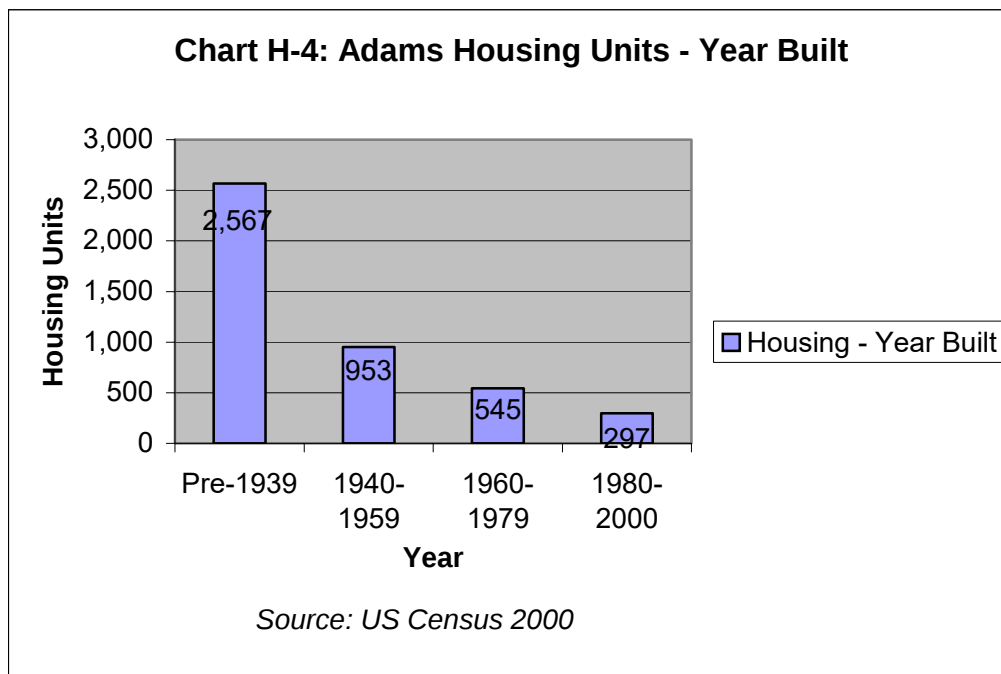
The town of Adams has municipal water and sewer system serving 98% of households. The remaining 2% of Town residences have on-site waste disposal systems.

Massachusetts Electric Company provides electricity service for the Town. Berkshire Gas provides gas service in town. Verizon provides the town with telephone service. Adelphia Cable in North Adams provides cable television and internet service. Internet service is also available from Berkshire County Network. The former landfill located to the northeast center of town is presently capped and lined. Trash pick-up service is provided privately for a fee.

C. Current Housing Conditions

Age of Housing Stock

Chart H-4: Housing Unit Construction – Year Built



Assessment of the Housing Stock

The town of Adams receives an average of 250 building permits a year. The majority of these permits are for renovations and restorations. Adams has a very aged housing stock (see Chart H-4), and a number of houses in disrepair. The Building inspector notes the majority of the housing stock to be in structural disrepair, having a multitude of serious code violations. The housing stock is considered to be in various stages of deterioration and include such deficiencies as cracked foundations, crumbling masonry walls, failing roofs, outmoded electrical and mechanical systems, unsafe entryways, and the existence of lead paint and asbestos.

Health Violations

As part of the Section 8 program, Berkshire Housing Services and the Adams Housing Authority conduct annual inspections of all apartments with certificates of occupancy that are being leased to Section 8 recipients. The Adams Housing Authority only inspects houses already granted

certificates of occupation and therefore already within federal guidelines. Berkshire Housing Authority has its own health and habitation standards and has rejected several section 8 voucher units in Adams that weren't up to BHS standards.

III. Housing Profile – Demand

A. Population Statistics

Historical Population Counts

Source: BRPC 2001 Data Book Census Figures

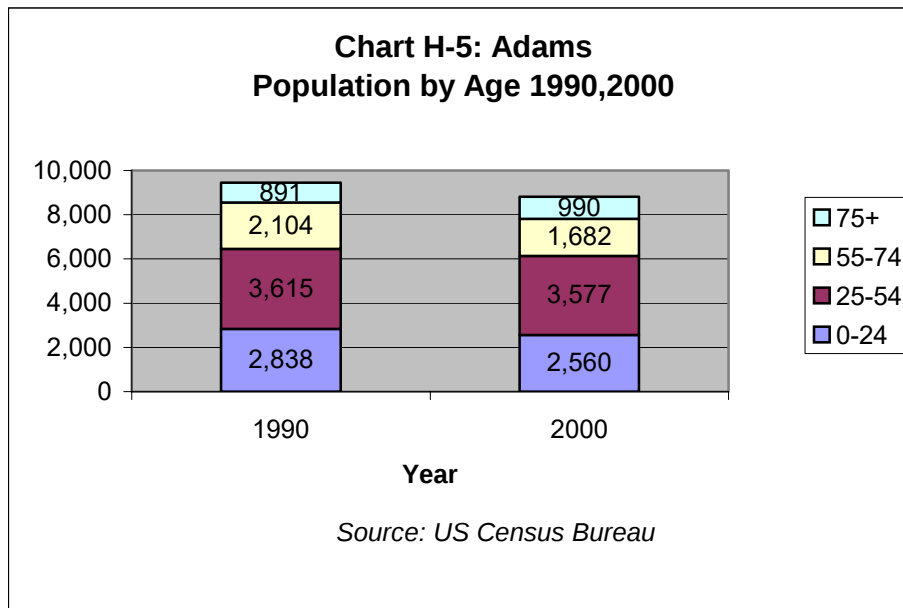
Table H-6: Historical Population Counts

	Town	Berkshire County
1970	11,772	149,402
1980	10,381	145,110
1990	9,445	139,352
2000	8,809	134,953

Source: BRPC 2001 Data Book Census Figures

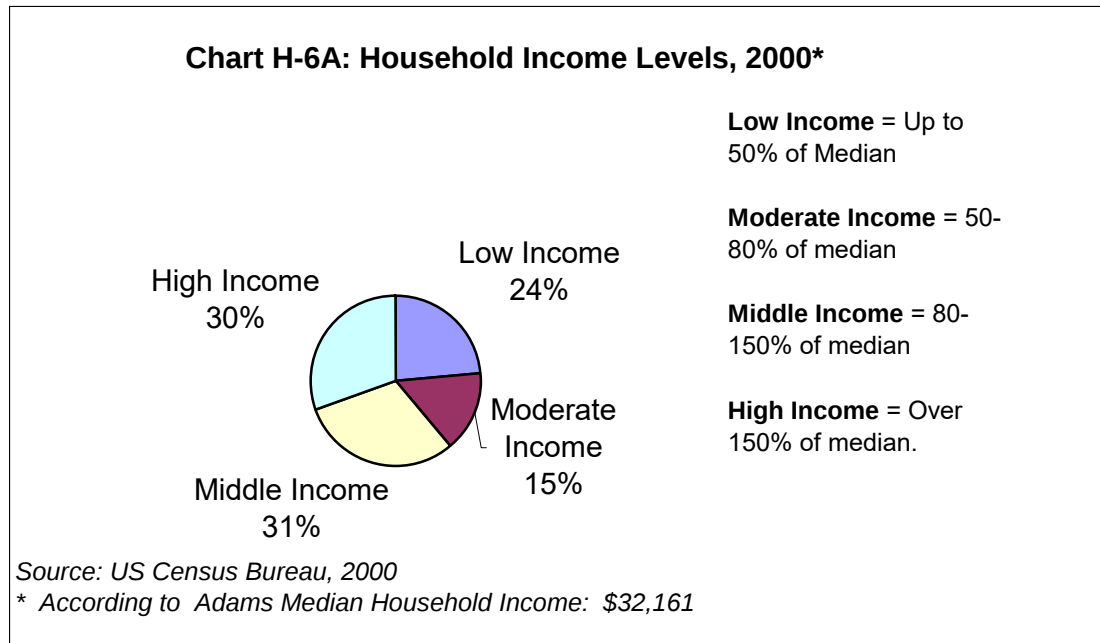
Population By Age

Chart H-5: Population By Age 1990, 2000.



B. Economic Statistics:

Adams Household Income Levels



Berkshire County Household Income Levels

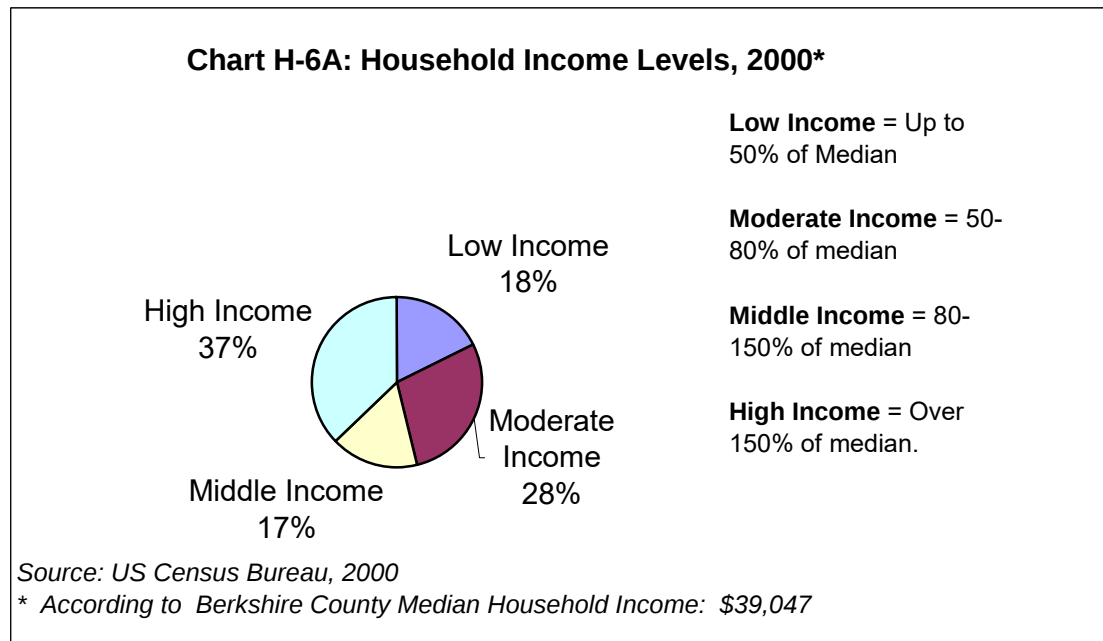


Table H-7: Employment and Wages in Adams

Year	Total Annual Payroll	Avg Annual Wage	Establishments	Total Employees	Agriculture Forestry Fishing	Government	Construction	Manufacturing	Trade	Services
1985	\$33,992,602	\$16,794	167	2,024	conf	376	160	591	468	283
1986	\$36,744,301	\$17,497	170	2,100	conf	383	197	581	492	292
1987	\$41,597,000	\$18,712	186	2,223	conf	375	271	596	510	305
1988	\$50,014,398	\$19,559	188	2,557	conf	385	266	842	549	326
1989	\$57,261,899	\$19,973	194	2,867	conf	384	289	1,030	612	350
1990	\$57,836,843	\$22,400	186	2,582	conf	369	215	813	669	332
1991	\$53,329,572	\$23,576	176	2,262	conf	348	193	634	599	309
1992	\$55,987,879	\$24,917	176	2,247	conf	346	152	592	672	319
1993	\$53,510,674	\$23,337	189	2,293	conf	354	131	534	742	338
1994	\$58,207,633	\$24,457	180	2,380	conf	379	144	560	764	345
1995	\$50,558,991	\$24,869	173	2,033	conf	349	159	460	549	348
1996	\$53,735,716	\$24,947	171	2,154	5	351	168	464	582	373
1997	\$57,491,626	\$25,677	174	2,239	conf	362	164	478	640	363
1998	\$56,930,428	\$27,136	172	2,098	6	370	168	480	570	290
1999	\$58,640,569	\$27,148	183	2,160	8	399	177	482	595	308
2000	\$62,203,309	\$29,094	187	2,138	8	396	199	474	581	291
2001	\$64,234,275	\$29,317	195	2,191	8	421	229	497	548	308

Source: MA Department of Employment and Training

C. Market Trends for Housing

In recent interviews with the Berkshire Eagle, (*Housing Demand Up, Supply Down* June 11, 2002), real estate agents have seen an increase in demand and a reduction of supply throughout Berkshire County. (See appendix) Realtors from Great Barrington, West Stockbridge, Lenox and Pittsfield commented that prices are higher than last year and "the tope end of the market is very strong." In the short term, there appear a combination of factors increasing real estate investment, such as a low interest rate and a lack of confidence in investing in the stock market. Longer-term factors influencing the West Stockbridge real estate market is a marked trend for high demand and higher real estate prices for higher-end homes - most notably high-end second homes - currently being experienced in South County. Realtors noted a strong desire of their clients to live in areas close to Lenox, Tanglewood, and Great Barrington for their cultural attractions and restaurants. The national association of Realtors currently (February 28, 2003) lists 31 houses for sale in Adams with an average sales price of \$119,000. The lowest priced

Appendix A.1

property was listed at \$35,000, the highest priced was \$245,500, and the median listed price was \$98,000.²

Waiting Lists for affordable units in Town from BHDC

According to Berkshire Housing, there are 13 families in line to receive section 8 housing vouchers for Town. Currently, there are 25 families in Town that are leased under section 8.

Fair Market Value Rents for Adams				
0 Bedroom	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom
338	480	591	742	919

Rental Housing

Census 2000 shows a 3.5% decrease in year round rental units from 1990-2000.³ Census 2000 also shows a dramatic, 63% increase in median contract rent within Adams 1990 to 2000 increasing from \$259 per month in 1990 to \$410 in 2000.

IV. Gap Analysis

Housing Affordability Methodology

The housing affordability study was conducted to determine whether or not the “typical” family in Town could actually afford to buy a home in Town at current market values. According to HUD guidelines housing is considered to be affordable when monthly mortgage payments comprise no more than twenty-eight percent (28%) of a household’s total monthly income.

The typical family was defined as a household with an income equal to the median estimated income of the Town. The Town’s median housing price was presented as determined from sales data provided by Warren Information Services, while an estimate of the Town’s median income for 2000 was given by the US Census Bureau 2000 Census.

Maximum price affordability levels were determined by an average of mortgage loan qualification calculations provided by local mortgage lenders. The analysis was based on a 10% down payment with no points. Calculations incorporate a mortgage interest rate of 6.9%, compiled as an average of current rates offered by local lending institutions at the time of the report. A current localized basic homeowners insurance quote for the Town was provided by local insurance brokers. The results estimate a maximum housing price with monthly payments that are no more than 28% of the household income with an assumed maximum of 8% in other debts or obligations forming a combined personal debt payments of no more than 36% of monthly income.

Chart H-8: 2001 Affordability Matrix

² Information from <http://www.realtor.com> February 28, 2003

³ US Census Bureau, 1990 & 2000 Census

Appendix A.1

Income Level	2000 Household Income Limits	28% of monthly Income	Median Sales Price (2002)	Calculated Maximum Affordable Sales Price	Number of 2001 Sales in affordability range	Number of Households in 2000	% of total households in 2000	% 2001 Sales affordable by these households	Affordability Gap
Low income up to 50% of Median	\$16,081	\$375	\$89,000	\$48,000	12	944	24%	19%	5%
Moderate income – up to 80% of Median	\$25,729	\$600	\$89,000	\$77,000	21	1,546	39%	33%	6%
Middle Income –up to 150% of Median	\$48,242	\$1,126	\$89,000	\$147,000	61	2,771	70%	95%	None (-25%)
High Income- up to 150% of median +	Over \$48,242	\$1,126	\$89,000	Over \$147,000	64	3,986	100%	100%	None

Median Household Income 2000	\$32,161	\$1,190	\$89,000	\$161,000	9	1,993	50%	32%	None (-5%)
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Sources:

Median Income: US census Bureau, 2000 Census

Median Sales Price: Warren Information Services <http://rers.thewarrengroup.com/townstats/search.asp>

Affordability Calculator: <http://www.legacybanks.com/site/calculators.html>

Mortgage Rate: LegacyBanks, LeeBank, & Berkshire Bank Websites

2001 Sales within Affordability Range: WIS: http://rers.thewarrengroup.com/sor/start_search.asp

2000 Household Income level Numbers : Census 2000

Affordability Findings

The Affordability Gap analysis shows that the typical, median income family in Adams, earning the median income (\$32,161) could afford the median priced house sold on the market in 2002. Affordability calculators determined that the median income household could afford up to \$97,000 for a house.

The analysis also shows a large number of houses available to middle income residents. Middle income households in Adams make up approximately 31% of the town's population, and are defined as those earning from \$25,729 to \$48,242. Approximately 95% or 61 of the 64 houses sold in 2002 were priced below \$147,000, making them accessible to middle income households.

VI. Existing Publicly and Privately Financed Housing Programs

A. Affordable Homeownership Assistance Programs

Good Samaritan Homeownership Program

Berkshire County Towns participate with Berkshire Housing Development Corporation, Berkshire Fund, Inc., and nine local lenders with the Good Samaritan Homeownership program described below. The participating lenders include Berkshire Bank, Legacy Banks, Pittsfield Cooperative Bank, Lee Bank, Lenox Savings Bank, Adams Co-operative Bank, So. Adams Savings Bank, Hoosic Bank and Greylock Federal Credit Union.

The Good Samaritan Homeownership program, which received a Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program Grant for \$96,000 in 1999 to assist low-income households with down payment and closing cost assistance. This program is available to income eligible residents throughout the County and more than 175 families have bought homes through the program in the past 10 years. Participating lenders provide a first mortgage equal to 80% of the purchase price, Berkshire Fund provides a second mortgage equal to 15% of the purchase price, and the buyers provide a 5% down payment. The banks also purchased more than \$1.6 million of low interest bonds to fund the down payment pool.

USDA Rural Housing Service Loan Guaranty Program

This program is a federally funded program from the Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Rural Housing Service. This program is available to all borrowers seeking mortgages throughout Berkshire County, with the exception of the City of Pittsfield. Through the Guaranteed Rural Housing Loan Program, moderate-income earners can qualify for existing single-family mortgages without a down payment. This program is currently available at Lee Bank.

MassHousing General Lending Program – 1st Time Homebuyers

MassHousing partners with Lee Bank, Berkshire Bank, and Legacy Banks to assist credit-worthy, low and moderate income, first time home buyers whose income and home purchase price fall within federally-set guidelines with financing and educational assistance.

In the last 5 fiscal years (from 1997-2001), Adams residents have received loans totaling \$774,000. Source: [MassHousing Stats](#)

As of March 6, 2002, eligibility requirements for MassHousing programs in Adams are:
Source: http://mhfa.com/limits_results.asp

Table H-9: Income Limits For MassHousing Programs In Adams			
Income Limits		Acquisition Cost Limits	
1 - 2 Persons	\$ 66,000	New Construction	Existing Housing
3 or More	\$ 75,900	Single Family	Single Family
		2 Family	2 Family
			3 Family
			4 Family

Municipal Tax Title Acquisitions for Purposes of Housing Development
If Applicable

B. Housing Rehabilitation Assistance Programs

Source: [MassHousing Use Figures for FY96-01](#) – and
[Additional MassHousing Programs](#)

MassHousing Septic Repair Loan Program

The Septic Repair Loan Program is a state-wide program established under Chapter 708 of the acts of 1966 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that is funded by MassHousing and available locally at Lee Bank. The MassHousing program offers reduced interest rate loans of \$1,000 - \$25,000 to cover costs associated with the upgrade of a failed sewage disposal system within the meaning of Title 5. Homeowners may qualify for 0%, 3% or 5% interest rates based on household income (see chart H-10). Repairs are for owner-occupied primary-residences only, not for second homes. The program is popular and several such loans are given out every year throughout the county. Few local applicants have failed to qualify. The Average Loan amount for a Septic Repair Loan has been relatively high, as the program's closing cost requirements have discouraged smaller value loans. The program began with a \$13 million State grant; it is considered successful; and is expected to continue with self-sufficient funds from loan payments.

In the last five fiscal years, one local resident of Adams has participated in the Septic Repair Loan program. (Source: MassHousing Use Figures for FY96-01)

Chart H-10: Income Limits for Septic Repair Loans in Berkshire County

Loan Rate	1-2 person family	3 or more persons
0%	\$23,000	\$26,000
3%	\$46,000	\$52,000
5%	\$92,000	\$104,000

MassHousing Home Improvement Loan Program

Local residents are also eligible for participation in the Home Improvement Loan Program at MassHousing. This program is administered through the Town of Adams Community Development Department. The program offers financing for income-eligible homeowners to repair their homes. Eligible properties are one-to-four family properties, and the residence must be the borrower's principal residence for minimum of one year. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000 - \$25,000 for loan terms of 5 to 15 years. In the last five fiscal years, no local residents of Adams have participated in the Home Improvement Loan program.

For more information on this program, contact Adams Community Development Department or Mass Housing.

Source: MassHousing Use Figures for FY96-01.

MassHousing Get the Lead Out Loan Program

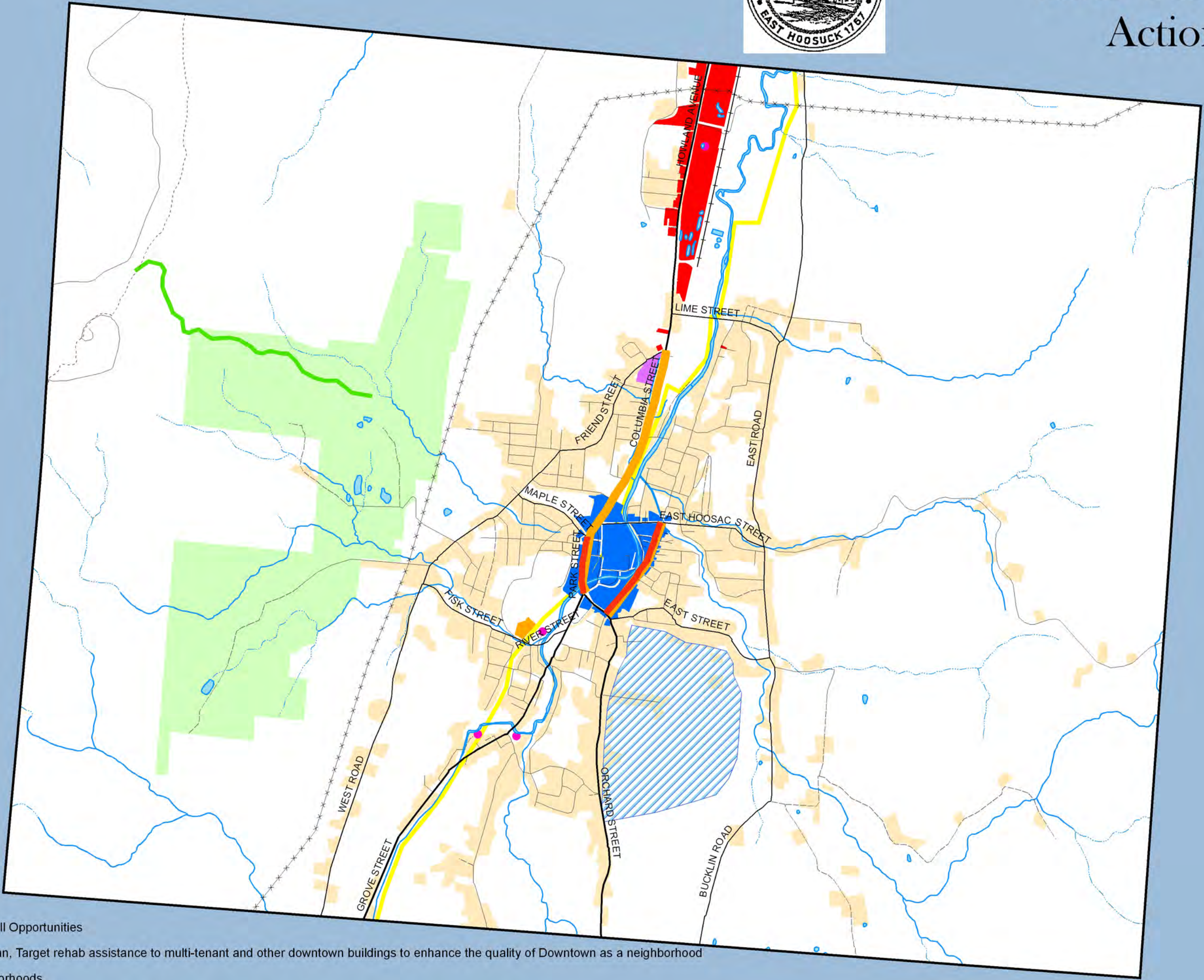
MassHousing's Get The Lead Out Program provides low cost financing to owners of 1–4 family properties to remove lead paint and reduce the possibilities of lead poisoning among children.

In the past five fiscal years, three residents of Adams have participated in this program. Owner-occupants who meet the income requirements (see Chart H-9) are eligible for a 0% deferred payment loan not due until the sale or refinancing of the property. Non-profit organizations are eligible for 0% fully amortizing loans on properties that are being

Town of Adams Massachusetts



Community Development Plan Land Use Suitability Action Map



- Identify Economic Redevelopment / Infill Opportunities
- Implement Downtown Development Plan, Target rehab assistance to multi-tenant and other downtown buildings to enhance the quality of Downtown as a neighborhood
- Preserve and Invest in Existing Neighborhoods
- Evaluate the feasibility of housing reuse in the McDermid Mill, the Old Stone Mill, Curtis Fine Papers, and other underutilized mill buildings
- Target redevelopment of vacant/underutilized upper floors on Park St, Summer St, and Route 8 Corridor to upgrade the quality of the Towns housing stock
- Streetscape and building improvements along Park and Summer Streets; historic resource protection
- Implement Amended Master Plan for Greylock Glen
- ▨ Water Distribution improvements for residential expenaion area within urban service boundary
- Extend Ashuwillticook Trail north to Downtown North Adams
- Renfrew Park Phased Renovation Project and Neighborhood Revililization Catalyst
- Repair Tennis Courts at Russell Field
- Re-establish winter use of the Thunderbolt Trail



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet
Massachusetts State Plane Meters
North American Datum 1983

This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, Massachusetts Highway Department, BRPC or the town may have supplied portions of this data.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

/cdp/adm/projects/actionmap.mxd June 15, 2004